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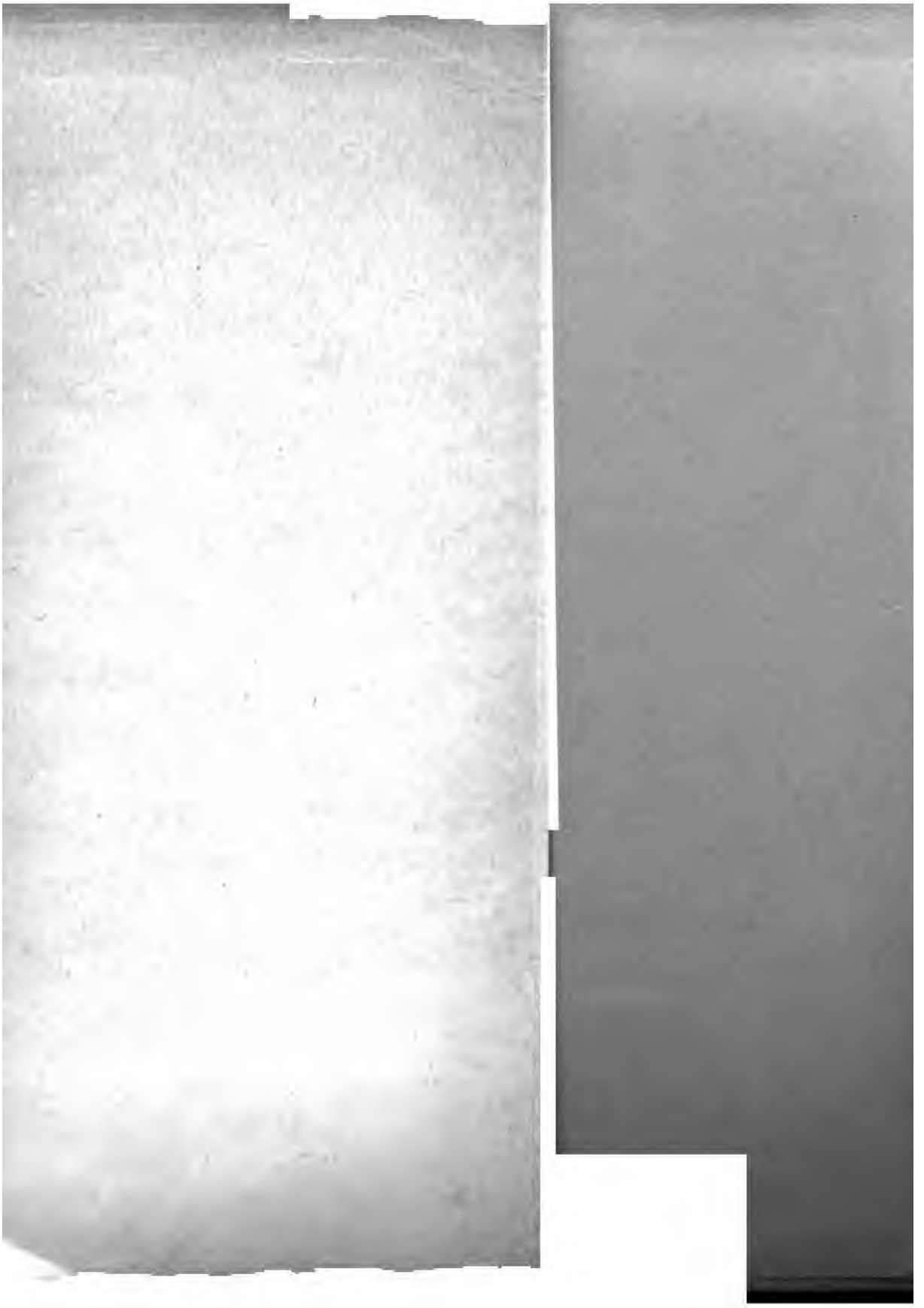
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HALF-TRVE STORIES

STANTON DAVIS KIRKHAM











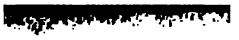


HALF-TRUE STORIES
FOR
LITTLE FOLKS OF JUST THE RIGHT AGE

This One
P3CR-6SB-KQCG







"'Better come down,' he called. 'They can't cackle under water, you know,' and then his head disappeared leaving a bubble on the surface."
(See page 17.)



HALF-TRUE STORIES

FOR LITTLE FOLKS OF JUST THE RIGHT AGE

BY

STANTON DAVIS KIRKHAM

ILLUSTRATED BY THE AUTHOR



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TO
MY LITTLE DAUGHTER
MARY



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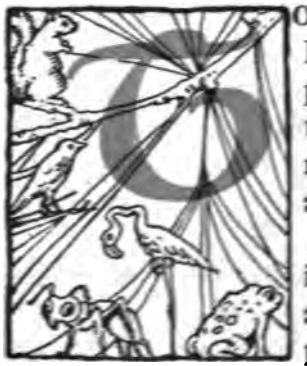
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HALF-TRUE STORIES
FOR
LITTLE FOLKS OF JUST THE RIGHT AGE

MISSIS COWBIRD'S ONLY CHILD



TO THE Middle-of-the-Woods came Missis Cowbird one day with her propensities. Mrs. Redeye lived there and Mrs. Yellow Warbler and neither of them knew anything about Missis Cowbird's propensities.

She asked them about housekeeping and if there was plenty of grub, and they were most scroobious and polite and said they thought that she would have no difficulty in obtaining provisions. Missis Cowbird said she was THAT pleased to hear it and, provisions or grub, it was all the same to her as long as there was plenty—all she wanted was vittles and drink.

So she went snooping about in the bushes to see what families were living there, and when she saw Mrs. Redeye building her nest and found Mrs. Yellow Warbler carrying grass and roots she was THAT pleased.

"It's just grand," said she, "and such a fine place to bring up a family."

"How interested she is," observed Mrs. Redeye, "I see her watching me every day."

"She watches me too," Mrs. Yellow Warbler said. "I wonder why she doesn't begin her own nest."

"Land! but they're simple minded," said Missis Cowbird to herself. "This is a grand place."

When Mrs. Redeye finished her nest, which was like a silk purse, she laid a spickle-speckled-spotty egg in it and was perfectly happy. Having laid an egg and at-

tained happiness she flew away to rest herself and smooth her feathers.

While she was gone Missis Cowbird, snooping about, looked in and saw the egg, all spickle-speckled. The nest looked so comfy that Missis Cowbird thought she would like to try it. So she sat on the egg to see how it felt.

"It's just grand," said she, and she decided that as soon as she had time she would make a nest like it. Before she knew it she had laid an egg by the side of Mrs. Redeye's.

"Land!" cried Missis Cowbird, "if I haven't gone and laid an egg," and she scrambled off the nest and flew away to the pasture.

When Mrs. Redeye had arranged her feathers and eaten a worm or two she flew back to her nest to sit on her spickle-speckled-spotty egg.

"That's a funny egg," said she. "I don't remember laying that," and she stood on the edge of the nest and stared at the big egg which was nearly twice as large as her own. "I must have laid it, of course, for how else could it get there?" And being a simple-minded bird she sat on the two eggs.

When Mrs. Yellow Warbler finished her nest which was like a mejum-sized teacup, she laid a strictly fresh egg and was perfectly happy, and having attained happiness, she flew away to take the air and smooth her feathers.

"As soon as I have time," said Missis Cowbird as

she went snooping through the woods, "I'll build a nest like that," and she stopped to look at the mejum-sized teacup nest of Mrs. Yellow Warbler. When she spied the strictly fresh egg she felt she must just try that nest once to see if it fitted her and then, her mind being distracted by the things of this world, she laid an egg.

"Land!" cried she, "if I haven't gone and laid another egg. I'm THAT careless," and hearing a rustling in the bushes she hastily flew away and took care not to be seen again in the Middle-of-the-Woods.

"What!" exclaimed Mrs. Yellow Warbler as she perched on the edge of her nest and stared at the low-down egg of Missis Cowbird. "Wha-a-t! I never laid such an egg as that in my life," and being a very astute young person she went to work to push the egg out of the nest.

She pushed till she had a crik in her neck and her back hurt her, but every time she poked that low-down egg to the top of the nest it rolled back again, till at last she actually had to sit on it to rest herself. But Mrs. Yellow Warbler was a very astute young person indeed, and as she sat on that low-down egg she took counsel with herself and pondered deeply.

The husband of Mrs. Yellow Warbler came and looked at her and asked, "My dear, are you asleep?"

And she said: "No, I am thinking."

He went away greatly perplexed, and after a time he came again and asked, "My dear, are you hungry?"

And she said, "I have no time to eat."

And he went away more perplexed than ever. But she continued to sit on the low-down egg and to take counsel with herself.

"It's the only thing to be done," said she at last, and she flew away and returned with a bill full of fuzz and began to build a floor over the low-down egg.

The husband of Mrs. Yellow Warbler came again with a pink and green caterpillar in his mouth.

"What in the name of the Great Horned Owl are you doing?" cried he, dropping the pink and green caterpillar on his vest as he caught sight of Mrs. Yellow Warbler.

"I'm covering up this egg," said Mrs. Yellow Warbler.

"Covering it up!" cried the husband of Mrs. Yellow Warbler. "Woman! isn't that your egg?"

"My egg! do you take me for an ostrich?"

"Well, whose egg is it then?"

"I don't know whose egg it is, it's not mine."

"H'm. Well let's roll it out."

"You can't roll it out. I've tried ever so hard and it can't be done."

"Let me show you," said the husband of Mrs. Yellow Warbler, puffing out his feathers and poking the egg with his bill.

"Now are you satisfied?" asked Mrs. Yellow Warbler, after he had poked the egg round and round the nest and rumpled all the feathers on his head.

"I'm not feeling very well this morning," said he. "That squash bug that I swallowed——"

"We've GOT to build a floor over it," said Mrs. Yellow Warbler emphatically.

"If it hadn't been for that squash bug——"

Mrs. Yellow Warbler went off for another bill full of fuzz.

"Oh dear!" cried she, standing on the edge of the nest a moment later with the bill full of fuzz and letting her wings droop.

"What is it?"

"Why I'll have to cover up my own egg too. I never thought of that!"

"I told you that wasn't the way to do it," said the husband of Mrs. Warbler, looking more cheerful.

"What SHALL I do!" cried Mrs. Yellow Warbler.

"Why don't you let it alone?"

"Yes and hatch out a goodness-knows-what."

"If I hadn't eaten that squash bug——"

"I'll have to cover it up—that's all there is to it," said Mrs. Yellow Warbler, and she brought another bill full of fuzz and being a very industrious as well as astute young person she soon had the work done.

And she made herself comfy in the nest which was like a mejum-sized teacup, laid three strictly fresh eggs and was happy again.

But Mrs. Redeye, being a simple soul and just-as-good-as-she-could-be, sat on the low-down egg of Missis Cowbird and laid more spickle-speckled-spotty

eggs of her own; and in due time the eggs were hatched, but the egg of Missis Cowbird hatched first.

And the only child of Missis Cowbird was large and bony and exceeding ugly. He had no feathers, he had no morals, and his mouth was like the bottomless pit.

When the eggs had all hatched Mr. Redeye came to look at his new children, while Mrs. Redeye perched on the edge of the nest.

"Lord! but he's ugly," said he, looking into the bottomless pit which was Missis Cowbird's only child.

"He's not quite as handsome as the others," Mrs. Redeye said. "But don't you think he looks a little like your family?"

"Looks like a buzzard," said Mr. Redeye.

"O my dear, how you talk. See what a splendid big baby he is."

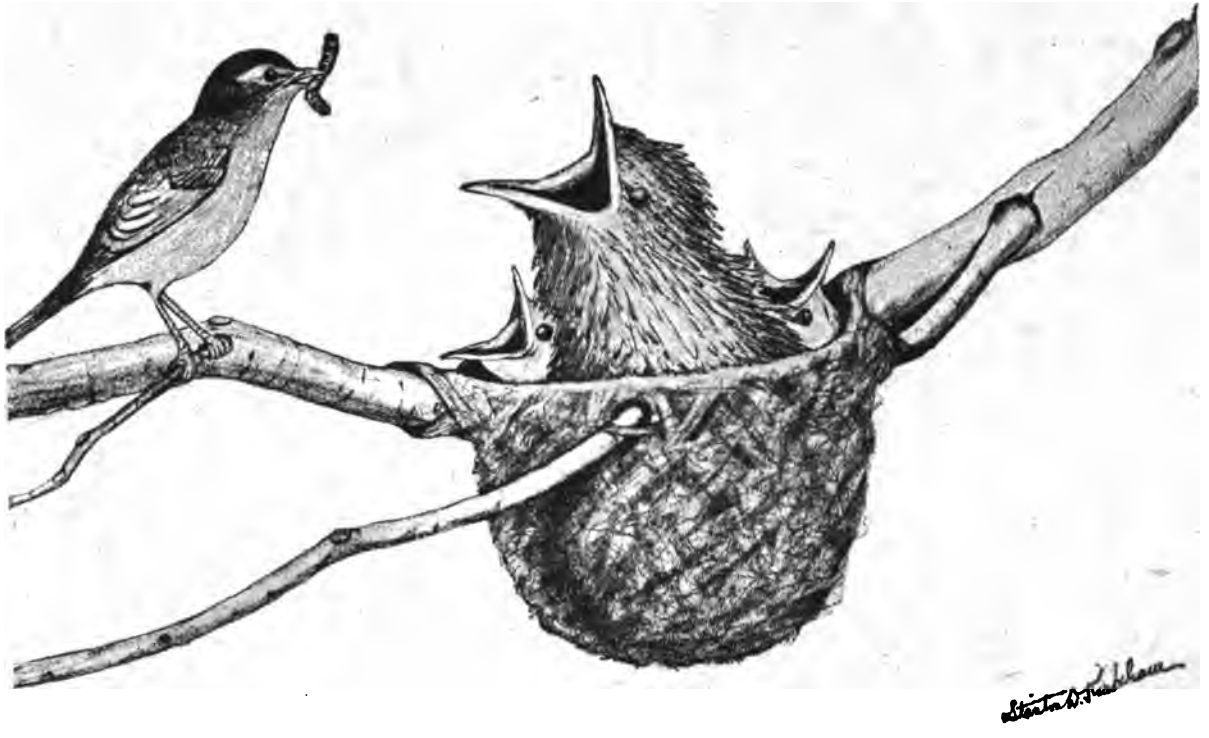
"We'll never be able to fill him up," said Mr. Redeye, shaking his head. "Never."

"He'll need plenty to eat, poor boy," Mrs. Redeye said. "He's so large for his age. Really he's not so bad looking. See what a fine mouth he has. He does look a little like your grandfather."

"Looks like a buzzard, I tell you," said Mr. Redeye again.

"Are you hungry, dear?" asked Mrs. Redeye, looking fondly at Missis Cowbird's only child.

"Y--an--h-h!" squawked the only child. "Y--an-h-h!!"



"They continued day after day to put things into the pit and the only child increased greatly in length and in breadth and his mouth filled the nest, so that the other children could no longer see out."

"What a sweet voice he has. DID you hear him? Let's feed the darling."

So Mr. and Mrs. Redeye worked steadily for fourteen hours and put one hundred and ninety-two lovely green caterpillars into the bottomless pit which was Missis Cowbird's only child, and then they slept the sleep of the just.

At precisely three thirty A.M., Eastern time, the only child awoke.

"Y--an--h-h-!" cried he. "Y--an-h-h-!!"

"The dear!" said Mrs. Redeye, "he's hungry."

"You'd better give the other children something today," said Mr. Redeye. "He took it all yesterday."

"Oh, they don't need as much as he does—he's such a big baby."

So Mr. and Mrs. Redeye worked fourteen hours and put one hundred and ninety-nine pale green caterpillars into the bottomless pit but the bottomless pit was not filled, and again they slept the sleep of the just.

And they continued day after day to put things into the pit and the only child increased greatly in length and in breadth and his mouth filled the nest, so that the other children could no longer see out and were fed only by the caterpillar crumbs which he let fall: all but the smallest, who was kicked out of the nest by the only child stretching his legs which had growing pains orful.

Then Missis Cowbird's only child acquired feathers

on his chin and was uneasy in his mind and discontented with his home.

"The poor boy needs a tonic," said Mrs. Redeye.

"Y--an-h-h-!" squawked the only child. "Y--an-h-h-!" and he scrambled to the edge of the nest and flopped his wings.

"Look at him—he'll fall!" cried Mrs. Redeye. "O dear!"

"Hope he don't fall on me—the buzzard!" said Mr. Redeye, backing off.

The only child shut his eyes and flopped into the next tree, taking with him the bottomless pit.

"Isn't he wonderful!" cried Mrs. Redeye. "And the very first time he's tried it."

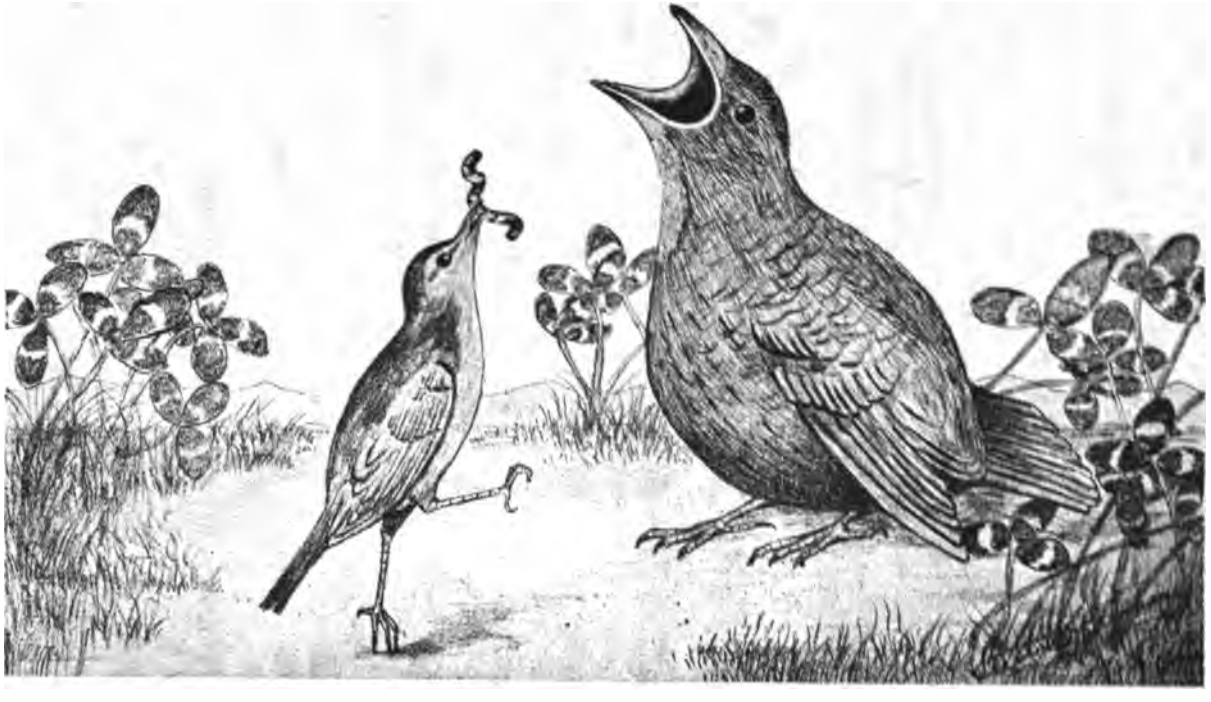
"Just see how well your brother flies," said she to the other children in the nest, who were stretching their thin necks and taking a full breath for the first time in their lives.

"Y--an-h-h-!" squawked the only child, fluttering to the ground.

"O you poor boy—you're hungry," cried Mrs. Redeye, and she worked the rest of that day putting pale green caterpillars into the bottomless pit. Every time she dropped one in she had to stand on tip toe and give a little flop.

"G--rooslum!" exclaimed Mrs. Yellow Warbler, most civilly, when she first saw Mrs. Redeye feeding the only child. "Who's that?"

"This is my big boy," simpered Mrs. Redeye. "Isn't he splendid?"



"Every time she dropped one in she had to stand on tip toe and give a little flop."

"Splendid," assented Mrs. Yellow Warbler, scraping her bill very hard on a twig. "He doesn't look at all like you, does he?"

"He takes after his father's family," Mrs. Redeye said. "He has such a good appetite. I brought him up entirely on pale green caterpillars and he's never had the least trouble with his bowels."

"Looks healthy enough," said Mrs. Yellow Warbler, scraping away.

"Y-an-n-h-h!" squawked the only child, opening the bottomless pit. "Y-an-n-h-h-!!"

"I think he is going to have a voice," said Mrs. Redeye proudly.

"G--rooslum!" and Mrs. Yellow Warbler flew away home and told how Mrs. Redeye was raising a cowbird and thought he was going to have a voice.

"That's what you would have done if it hadn't been for me, my dear," said the husband of Mrs. Yellow Warbler.

GOING SOUTH



HONK! HONK! HONK!—Faster! Faster! cried the eldest goose. "We've far to go."

"HONK! HONK! HONK! We're coming," answered the flock.

They were flying high in a dull grey sky and the earth lay like a purple and violet bowl beneath them. There were patches of black forest and the silver thread of the river, toy villages and fields that looked like checker boards, as hour after hour the flying wedge moved forward.

"HONK! HONK! HONK! There it is," cried the eldest goose.

"HONK! HONK! HONK! Here we are," answered the flock as the flying wedge hurled itself through the sunset clouds towards the pond, a shining silvery speck of blue in the distance.

"I'm weary!" cried the youngest gander as the flock settled down upon the pond.

"Be a man, my son! Be a man!" said the eldest goose.

"I'm hungry," the youngest gander cried.

"There's food for those who will hunt for it," the eldest goose replied.

Little Mr. Sandpiper, teetering along the shore, heard the flock honk and turning his head sideways saw the flying wedge like glittering motes in the sky.

"The Geese are coming," said he. "Now it will be crowded and noisy. Just listen to those Bluebills and Redheads—what a clatter they make. I can't stand so many cackling women—gabble! gabble! gabble!"

"What's the matter?" asked Mr. Horned Grebe, bobbing up from the bottom of the pond.

"O those cackling Geese are here—and all the Bluebills and Redheads are gabbling. It's no place for a quiet man."

"You wouldn't notice that if you were married," said Mr. Horned Grebe. "But it's quiet enough under water; I'm going below again," and he slowly sank till only his head was out of water. "Better come down," he called. "They can't cackle under water, you know," and then his head disappeared, leaving a bubble on the surface.

"He's a queer duck—and there's another," said little Mr. Sandpiper as he heard Miss Loon laughing hysterically. "They're all queer."

"They've come!" screamed Miss Loon from the pond.

"I'm not deaf," said little Mr. Sandpiper.

"I say they've com-m-m-m-m-m-e!!!" screamed Miss Loon again.

"Well, I hear them," said little Mr. Sandpiper, starting on a run for the swamp. "That woman would drive a man crazy."

Mr. Bittern—he-of-the-legs—was standing in the swamp, up to his knees in water and apparently staring

at the sky directly overhead, so that his bill and neck made a straight line and looked very much like a stick in the mud.

"I wonder what he's looking at," said little Mr. Sandpiper, turning his head on one side and gazing at the heavens.

He-of-the-legs never moved and little Mr. Sandpiper skipped around the edge of the pool, staring at the sky.

"What can it be?" asked Miss Crow as she saw Mr. Bittern and little Mr. Sandpiper gazing upward. And she paused and peered at the sky also.

"There must be something up there," said Mr. and Mrs. Chickadee, when they saw the others, and they craned their necks and observed the heavens from a cracker vine.

And there gathered in that place others to the number of five and twenty to gaze at the sky and one did as another, but no one thought of asking why.

Among those present were Mrs. Grackle—moire antique; Mrs. Robin, costume of slate grey with rufous corsage; Mrs. Redeye, olive green.

"Do you see it?" asked Mrs. Robin.

"I don't quite make it out," replied Mrs. Grackle.

"Where is it?" inquired Mr. Chickadee.

"Somewhere up there," said Miss Crow.

"Ho-hum!" exclaimed Mr. Bittern, suddenly dropping his head and yawning prodijjus, "I must have been asleep—why what are the blamed fools staring at?"

"It must have gone," remarked Miss Crow, preening her feathers.

"There doesn't seem to be anything there now," Mrs. Grackle said, scraping her bill.

"Not a thing," assented Mr. Chickadee, hopping off.

"Ho-hum! not a blamed thing," yawned he-of-the-legs, winking one little eye most solemn. "Well! Well! Well! I suppose you're all ready to start—it'll soon be time. Days are gettin' short; grub's gettin' kind of short too. Ho-hum!" and Mr. Bittern opened his bill very wide, then shut it with a snap and poked it into his feathers.

"Not I," exclaimed old Miss Crow, drawing herself up. "This country's good enough for me. I've no use for those savages—TOUcans and TROgans and PELLIcans and goodness knows what. Painted and bedizzened heathen!"

"Don't you ever want to travel?" asked Mrs. Redeye, olive green. "It broadens the mind."

"Travel!" sniffed Miss Crow contemptuously, "Yes, and waste my time with those painted savages."

"Ho-hum! we can't all see things the same way," said he-of-the-legs, opening his bill very wide and tucking it away again.

"Well, I never could see how decent folks could go straggling off every year to these outlandish places."

"Ho-hum!"

"It's so warm and comfy," said Mrs. Redeye: "SUCH bugs and so much sunshine."

"Must be tejjus to have the sun shining all the time," snapped Miss Crow.

"Ho-hum!"

"It gets so cold here," Mrs. Redeye continued cheerfully. "It makes me creep to think of it."

"There's nothing like cold weather for building you up," said old Miss Crow "—especially if you've been settin'."

"Ho-hum!"

"Now you see here, Mr.—Mr.—Legs."

"Bittern, ma'am. N-r-e-t-t-i-b,—Bittern."

"N-r-e-t-t-i-b," repeated Miss Crow. "That doesn't spell Bittern—unless you spell it backwards."

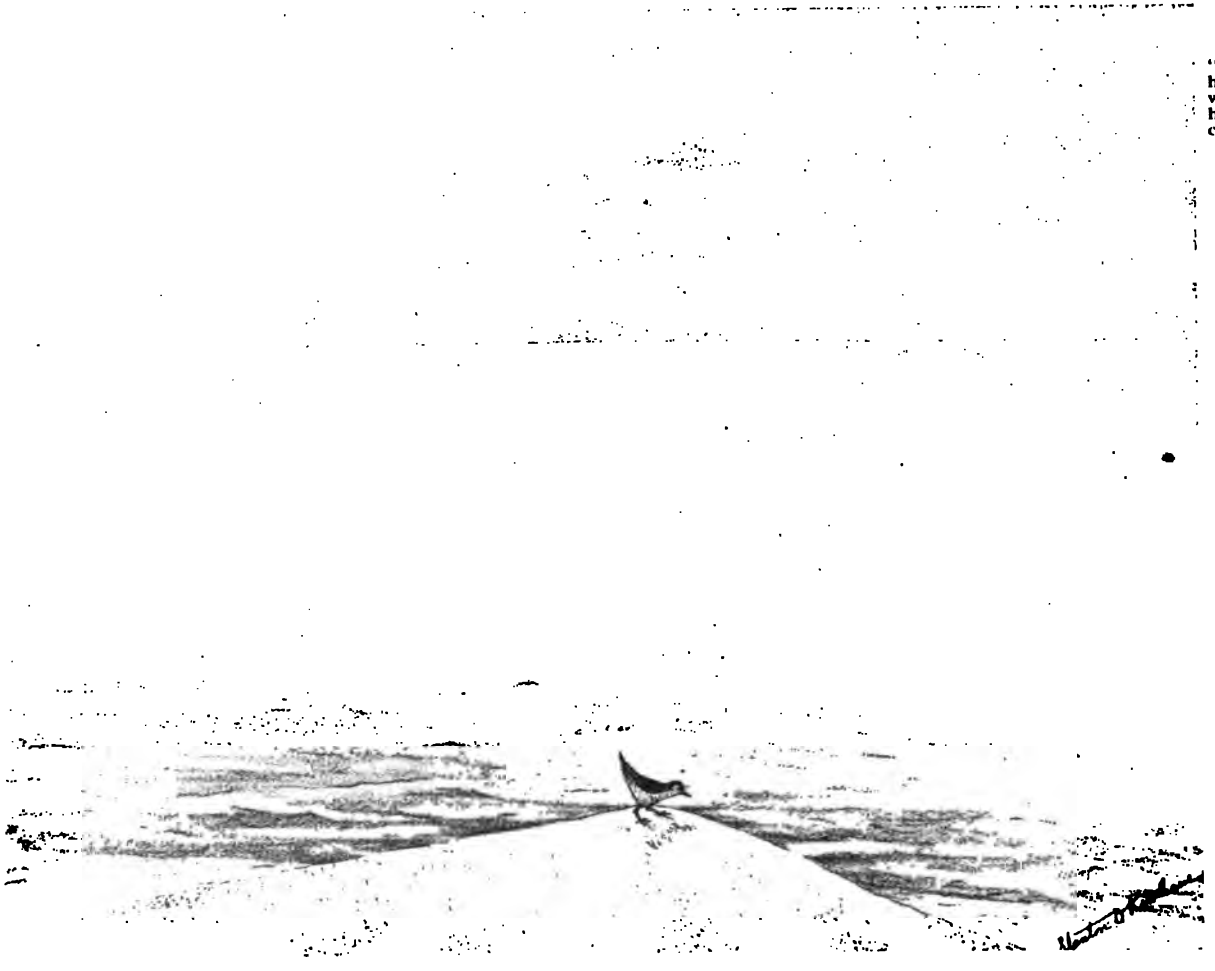
"And why not spell it backwards, ma'am? Backwards or forwards or inside out or upside down, or hind-side-before—my name's Bittern just the same—Ho--hum!"

"I wish they'd hold their tongues," said little Mr. Sandpiper as he flew to the other side of the pool. "There isn't a place left where a man can be quiet."

One by one and two by two, they who had gathered to the number of five and twenty to see what Mr. Bittern had been looking at, silently dispersed until only little Mr. Sandpiper and he-of-the-legs were left.

"Grub's gettin' scarce," remarked Mr. Bittern one day, the weather being exceeding cold.

"I wouldn't mind that if those Bluebills and Redheads didn't make so much noise," little Mr. Sandpiper said.



" 'Over there,' said he, 'is the Equator, where it's sizzling hot and nobody has cold toes.' "



"Ho--hum!"

"They talk all the time, but they haven't anything to say."

"People that haven't anything to say have GOT to talk all the time. Ho-hum! You're the solemnest little cuss between here and salt water. Why don't you make a noise yourself?"

"I don't see any sense in that," said little Mr. Sandpiper.

"You don't, hey! Well, there isn't any."

"Ho--hum! It's getting too cold for me," continued Mr. Bittern stretching, his long neck. "I'm goin' to get out of here," and he flopped his wings until he pulled his thin legs out of the mud and flew slowly away over the swamp.

"Quack! Quack! Quack!" cried the Redheads, "is everybody ready? Wait till I smooth my feathers! Why don't we start? Hurry up!" There was the sound of wings striking the water and then a WHIRR overhead: the Redheads had started.

That afternoon a flock of grackles passed over the swamp like a charge of shot.

"I'm going!" screamed Miss Loon from the pond. "I say I'm go-o-o-o-o-o-i-n-g!!!"

"That woman would drive a man crazy," said little Mr. Sandpiper, running away from the sound. There was ice on the edge of the pools and he warmed first one foot and then the other in his feathers. "I'll soon have it all to myself," said he.

But his toes grew exceeding cold and he was obliged to run up and down to keep warm. Some noisy argument there was among the Geese and with the Bluebills much talk of this and that; and thus, by reason of cold feet and a hunger for solitude, little Mr. Sandpiper was filled with unrest.

Now little Mr. Sandpiper being an orphan of tender years had never known the society of his kind and had had no little Sandpiper boys to play with. He had left Labrador, where he was born, because after the moult everybody else seemed to be going and he found himself moving along day by day. He remembered his mother saying that when winter came they would go to the Equator where it was sizzling hot and nobody had cold toes; but she disappeared one day and he never saw her again.

And it came to pass that as little Mr. Sandpiper was standing by the edge of the pond at night with his head under his wing, out of the sky there came to his ears the voice of a Solitary Sandpiper—one even as himself. Except his mother's, never before had he heard the voice of his kind and it made a new man of him. Turning his head he peered up into the darkness and listened. There it was again—sounding far above the earth—the voice of one even as he.

A strange feeling took possession of him. He forgot the Bluebills and the Geese and the coldness of the toes. Again he heard the call, far in the distance this time, and he sprang into the air and followed in the

"He flew out over the deep blue sea and it was true, even as Mr. Bittern had said, there were no stops for dinner."



darkness, rising higher and higher as he went, till he had become a little moving speck among the clouds. Other birds were flying in the darkness, some far above him, some nearer the earth. Now and again he thought he heard the voice of the Solitary Sandpiper and darted ahead.

When day broke he was still scudding across the sky thirty miles an hour, a mote in the morning light. But the other Sandpiper was nowhere to be seen. "I'm going to the Equator," said he to himself. The call of the Sandpiper had changed him. Yes, surely he was another man. Hour after hour and day after day he kept on his journey, thirty miles an hour, by schedule subject to change without notice . For there had entered into the heart of the mote in the sunshine which was little Mr. Sandpiper, a yearning not understood of man.

From time to time he came to earth—according to schedule—to feed and to rest himself. The first stop for refreshments was on the banks of the Potomac. He breakfasted in the Dismal Swamp, had lunch by the Great Pedee and dined on snails on the edge of Lake Okeechobee. On the shores of Lake Okeechobee he beheld a stick in the mud and lo! it was Mr. Bittern—he-of-the-legs.

"Ho--hum!" said Mr. Bittern. "The solemnest little cuss between here and salt water!"

"I'm going to the Equator," cried little Mr. Sandpiper. "Have you been there?"

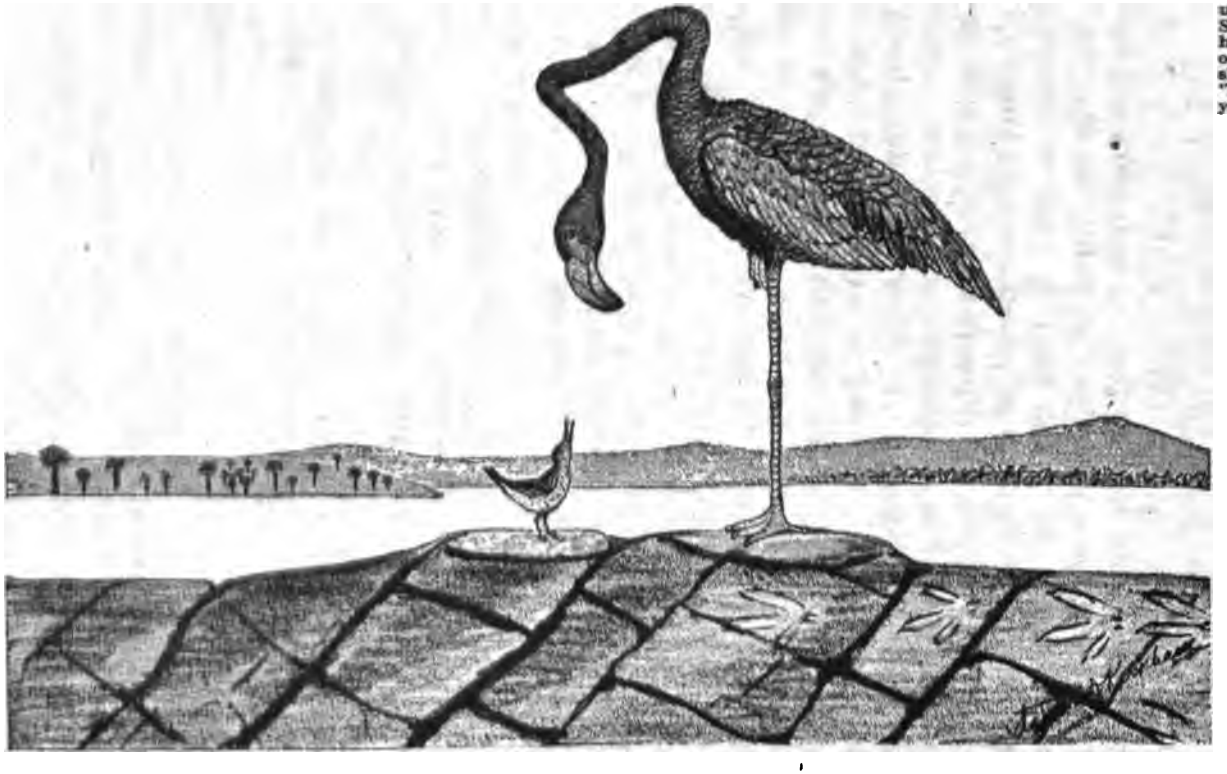
"No'p! and what's more, I'm not goin'. Why it lies beyond the sea, man! Hurricanes, and no stops for dinner, mind you," and Mr. Bittern opened his mouth very wide and winked an eye at little Mr. Sandpiper. "I can get enough grub right here,"—pulling one leg out of the mud—"and what more do you want?" and Mr. Bittern speared a small goggleeye and swallowed him. "Ho-hum! We can't all see things the same way."

"I should think you'd want to go to the Equator, though," said little Mr. Sandpiper. "Where it's sizzling hot and nobody has cold toes."

"Ho--hum!"

But somehow he was not so sure about the Equator, since Mr. Bittern had mentioned the hurricanes—and no stops for dinner, and he puttered around and doddered about on the edge of Lake Okeechobee till evening. It was true that snails were plentiful and neither were his toes exceeding cold and he meditated upon these things as he was about to fall asleep, when suddenly from out of the sky came the cry of a passing Sandpiper —the voice of one even as he. And thereupon ceased the meditations and little Mr. Sandpiper, seized again with that yearning not understood of man, sprang into the air and followed in the darkness.

He came to the tip-end of Florida and beyond him lay the sea as blue as blue could be. "Over there," said he, "is the Equator, where it's sizzling hot and nobody has cold toes." And he flew out over the deep



" 'Don't you understand pla_ Sandpiper?' shoute_ he, as the benighted one continued to shake his head. 'Then why don't you say so?' "



blue sea and it was true, even as Mr. Bittern had said, there were no stops for dinner. In due time he arrived at the coast of Yucatan, according to schedule and completely empty, and saw many heathen birds of strange customs—TOUcans and TROgans and PELLIcans. He marvelled at the tail of the Motmot and the brilliant handpainted nose of the Toucan, saying to himself—being as yet young and untravelled, "Shoot the nose!" and the Toucan, seeing little Mr. Sandpiper teetering along, remarked to an elderly Trogan, "There's one of those fool tourists staring at me."

After a continuous luncheon which lasted three days and consisted entirely of bugs with foreign names, all unknown to little Mr. Sandpiper who had never had anything but home cooking before, he set out once more over the deep blue sea and was soon out of sight of land. Again he suffered from irregular meals but he continued to yearn for the Equator with a yearning not understood of man. And so he arrived at length —having made no stops for dinner—on the oozy banks of the Orinoco, and seeing a strange heathen bird, the same being of a delicate pink hue and possessed of extremely long legs, asked, "Is this the Equator?"

But the heathen bird of a delicate pink hue only shook his head, whereupon little Mr. Sandpiper stood on tiptoe and repeated the question in a louder voice while the strange bird looked at him sadly and made no reply. "Don't you understand plain Sandpiper?" shouted he as the benighted one continued to shake his head. "Then why don't you say so?"

"These natives haven't any sense," said he to himself as he teetered along the oozy banks of the Orinoco, picking up a bug with a foreign name now and then. "I wish I knew what I was eating—these bugs have such a queer taste."

"Are you the young gentleman who was looking for the Equator?" asked a languid voice with a soft southern accent. Little Mr. Sandpiper dropped the foreign bug with the cayenne flavor which he was trying to swallow, as he saw the ancient-and-honorable Mr. Crocodile peering at him from the coffee-colored water of the Orinoco.

"Step this way, please," said Mr. Crocodile, with a twelve-foot smile.

Little Mr. Sandpiper had never seen a tropical smile before and he stood looking down the long rows of shining teeth—like two rows of tombstones—into the dim interior of the ancient-and-honorable Mr. Crocodile which lay beyond. "What a polite native," he said to himself as the tropical smile grew more expansive, "and so smiling."

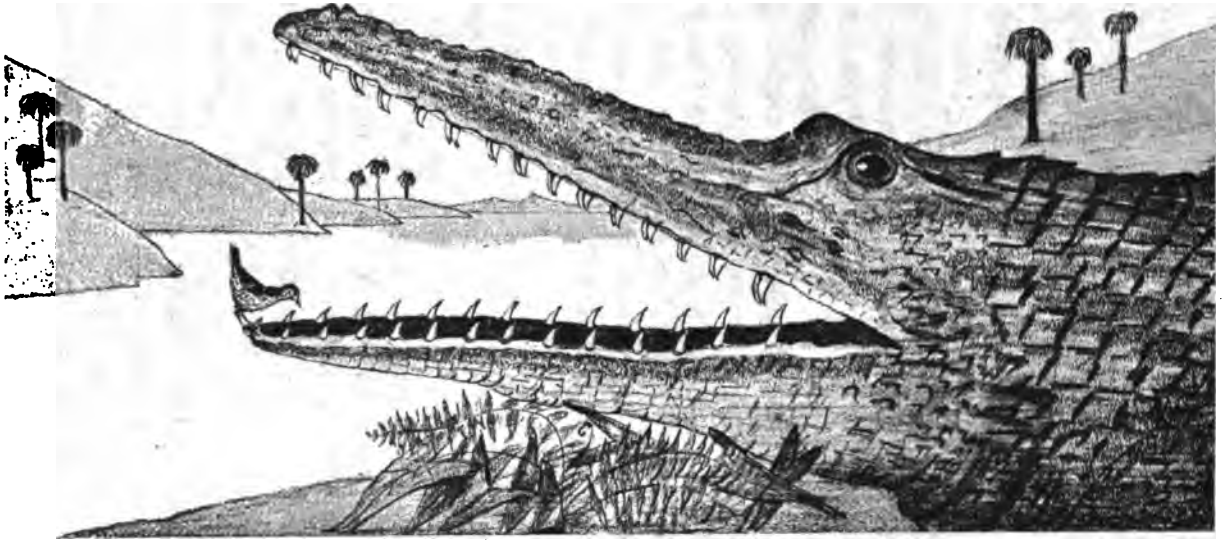
"There's a mango seed or an ivory nut wedged in my tooth," explained the ancient-and-honorable, beaming tropically, "and it hurts orful. If you'll just get it out we'll start for the Equator."

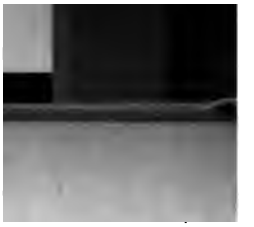
"Which tooth is it?" asked little Mr. Sandpiper, pecking at the nearest one, "Do you feel anything?"

"Nod budg. Muth be furer back."

"How far back?" inquired little Mr. Sandpiper,

"['Which tooth is it?', asked little Mr. Sandpiper, pecking at the nearest one,] 'Do you feel any-] thing?' "





standing on tip-toe and looking down the long rows of tombstones.

At that moment appeared a troop of howling monkeys, swinging by their tails in a bread fruit tree. "Yah! Yah! Yah!" cried they, catching sight of little Mr. Sandpiper. "Skin him! Pull his tail out!"

"Oh, what horrid hairy little boys," exclaimed little Mr. Sandpiper, getting ready to fly.

"Don't be afraid," said Mr. Crocodile with his tropical smile, "they aren't little boys—they're only monkeys."

"They look like little boys to me," said little Mr. Sandpiper suspiciously.

"Pull out his tail! Wring his neck!" yelled the howling monkeys as they swung through the trees.

"They ARE little boys!" cried little Mr. Sandpiper in a panic and he darted into the air and scudded away over the oozy banks of the Orinoco.

The fear of little boys had entered into his heart, for his mother had said to him when he came from the egg—"My son, of all wild animals the most terrible is the little boy; he is greatly to be feared." And so little Mr. Sandpiper, hearing the howling of the monkeys which then filled the jungle, dared not return to bask in the tropical smile of the ancient-and-honorable Mr. Crocodile and kept on his way till he came to a Military Macaw perched in a mangrove and staring at the coffee-colored water.



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"Is this your first visit to the tropics—and how long are you going to stay—and what are your impressions of our country?" screamed the Military Macaw.

"Dear me—I really don't know," said little Mr. Sandpiper, wishing he hadn't stopped. "Will you please tell me if this is the Equator, where it's sizzling hot and nobody—"

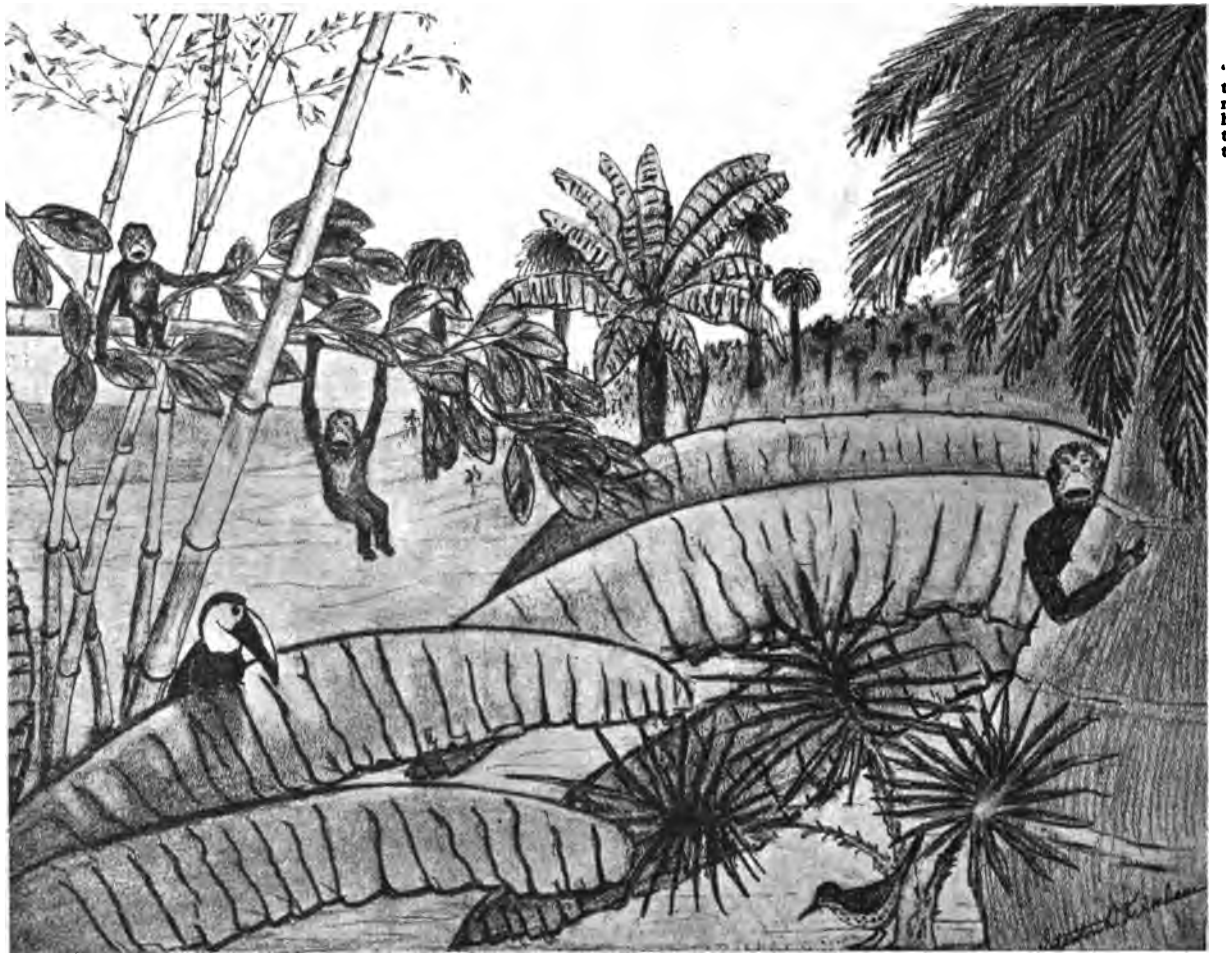
"No, this is Grand View, but it's hot as the hinges —Is this your first visit to the Tropics—and how long are you going to stay—and—what—"

"Really I must be going," said little Mr. Sandpiper, edging away. "Can you tell me how far it is to the Equator?"

"Eight hours—Is this your first—"

But little Mr. Sandpiper was already on the wing. "He's worse than Miss Loon," said he. And he continued on his journey for eight hours and in the eighth hour saw and heard a prodijjus flock of Demnition parrots. Demnition parrots, you know, are green and red, and African parrots are grey. "That seems to be some sort of a winter resort," exclaimed little Mr. Sandpiper, hurrying forward. "It must be the Equator."

The parrots which were as the sands of the seashore, were all screaming at once and little Mr. Sandpiper was soon filled with dismay. When they caught sight of him they paused for a moment. "A man! A



" 'Pull out his tail! Wring his neck!' yelled the howling monkeys as they swung through the trees."





man!" they shrieked, and with the rustling of myriad wings they rose from their perches and settled all about him.

"How do you like the Equator?" screamed the lady parrot nearest him.

"Such a quiet restful place," shrieked another.

"It's almost too quiet," squawked a third.

"Won't you join us?" screamed the first. "We were discussing the benefits of rest."

"And of quiet," cried the second. "But perhaps he isn't interested."

"Dear me, madam," began little Mr. Sandpiper, wondering how he could escape, "I was looking for a quiet spot."

"JUST the place for him," shrieked all the lady parrots.

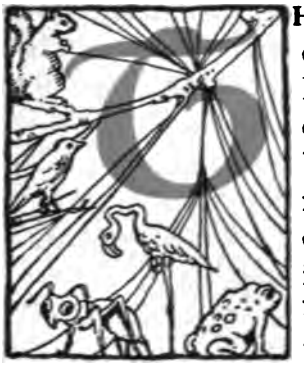
"He's so shy," screamed several of the nearest as little Mr. Sandpiper grew more and more fidgety. "—and so young."

Little Mr. Sandpiper looked anxiously about and wished he had never had that yearning for the Equator, not understood of man—even if it was sizzling hot and nobody had cold toes. As soon as the lady parrots began to discuss again the benefits of quiet he darted away through the brush, dodging the bugs with foreign names and never pausing till he was out of breath.

As he was resting in the shade of an ivory nut palm the voices of the howling monkeys came to his ear.

"There are those horrid hairy little boys again," cried he. "I'd rather have cold toes than stay in such a place," and that very night he started for the deep blue sea.

CHUCKY AND MISS FLEA



THE woodchucks all go to bed very early—early in October, you know. Ever since Time began—which was on a Monday—the Wise Men have been wondering why, and they have never even guessed the reason. Some of them—the wisest—have said that it was due to the bite of the orful blue-bottle fly; others that it was the deadly snooze bacillus. But the fact is they go to sleep because they are sleepy—simply and solely and wholly because they are sleepy. Time began on a Monday at one o'clock—it had to be one o'clock, of course—and the woodchucks have been sleepy from that day to this. They NEVER take anything to put them to sleep, like calomel, or chloroform, or catnip. The hardest thing a woodchuck has to do is to keep awake.

Now Mr. Woodchuck had a boy named Chuck which is English for Ah-kuk-wah-djees. He called him Chucky for short. Along in March Mr. Woodchuck used to give Chucky a poke and say, "Wake up, Chucky, my Boy. It's most April." And Chucky would answer, "Yezir," and turn over and go to sleep again. Then his very fat pa would give him a harder poke and bite his left ear—"Come sir! Get up!" and Chucky would unroll himself and crawl out of bed.

Chucky had no manners. Woodchucks never have any manners; they have only customs. One of Chucky's

customs was to eat with his fingers. When he was quite-a-small-boy he used to sit up on his hind legs and stuff red clover into his mouth the way he had seen his very fat Pa and his equally fat Grand-pa do—very respectable woodchucks they were, too. Chucky never went to school. His Pa taught him all he knew. Of course he never taught him manners because he hadn't any himself, but he did teach him LOTS of customs. Chucky never studied grammar either. He always said "hain't" for "ain't" and "gosh" for "gee," just the way his very fat Pa did.

But Chucky was a good boy, though he had no manners and lots of customs and always said "gosh" for "gee," and his Pa was fond of him in his peculiar way. He was a-dutiful-and-obedient son and so-good-and-everything and always minded his very fat Pa. But he hated to get up in the morning and this troubled Mr. Woodchuck for HE always got up in March for breakfast, while it was all he could do to get Chucky up by April.

Chucky was always wondering; it was one of his customs. He wondered why his Pa was so fat. He wondered why the sun didn't shine at night; and he wondered why everybody else was in such a hurry when he liked to sit in the sun and wonder—and while he was wondering he always fell asleep.

"Chucky, my boy, get up!" said his very fat Pa one morning in March when Chucky was quite-a-big-boy and had wondered about everything twice.



"When he was quite-a-small-boy he used to sit up on his hind legs and stuff red clover into his mouth the way he had seen his very fat Pa and his equally fat Grand-pa do."



"I wonder what time it is," said Chucky, who was rolled into a ball with his tail over his nose.

"It's time for you to get up—that's what time it is," his Pa said.

"I wonder why," said Chucky and his very fat Pa bit his ear real hard and Chucky unrolled himself.

Chucky's bed room was a dark hole and when he waddled out he just naturally sat in the bright sunshine and blinked. He blinked so hard he didn't see Mr. Dog coming that way, but Mr. Dog saw him and grabbed him. That very instant Mr. Woodchuck looked out of the other door and when he saw Mr. Dog grab Chucky he made a noise that was something like a fife and a little like a steam whistle and not exactly like either, but it was so sharp and sudden that it made Mr. Dog jump clean up in the air, and of course he dropped Chucky who scuttled into his hole. When Mr. Dog came down there wasn't a woodchuck in sight.

Now there was a lady flea—a well bred flea—who always went with Mr. Dog on his travels and always staid with him when he was at home. That flea was THAT fond of Mr. Dog. It happened that when he grabbed Chucky this highly bred flea, so particular in her tastes, was having a light luncheon on Mr. Dog's chocolate-colored nose, for she often took a bite when travelling, just to keep up her strength. When Mr. Dog jumped clean up in the air in that scandalous fashion, Miss Flea was disturbed at her luncheon and,

used to eat between meals, she grew thinner and thinner and was very low in the mind.

One day in October Chucky felt so sleepy that he went in and went to bed. The weather was mild and scroobious but that boy rolled himself up into a ball and dropped to sleep, and being such a dutiful-and-obedient-son and so-good-and-everything, his very fat Pa let him sleep and very soon went to bed himself.

When she lived with Mr. Dog, Miss Flea had been a great traveller; now she had to settle down to a quiet life. She waited and waited for Chucky to wake up and every day she grew more nervous. She fussed and she fidgeted, she danced and she pranced, she lunched and she munched, but Chucky only scratched his nose in his sleep and the snow came and covered up the hole and buried them both for the winter.

"Woodchuck! nothing but woodchuck, morning, noon and night," groaned Miss Flea as she hopped about in the dark. "O, dear Mr. Dog, if you were here I could just eat you! I've always had the very best and here I am in a nasty cheap boarding-house."

Chucky slept from October till March, that being one of his customs, but Miss Flea was too fidgety to sleep. There she was shut up in the dark and she couldn't get out, and she wouldn't have known where to go if she had, or where to stop for lunch. She was a timid little thing and if she had had to go without her lunch it would have made her positively ill and as-faint-as-she-could-be.



She did not lift up her front feet daintily any more and she grew very untidy, living there all alone in the dark. Her eyes were red and her hair all frouzly—O turrible frouzly—and she looked frumpish and had a real boarding-house air. She said that when Chucky woke up she would go and look for Mr. Dog and keep house again the way she was accustomed to.

But when Chucky's very fat Pa called him in March and Chucky waddled out of his hole, Miss Flea just took a bite to keep up her strength and decided she would wait until summer. You see, she had the boarding-house habit and her hair staid frouzly and she always talked about the way she used to live and said that she couldn't stand this any longer and next summer she would surely move.

Well, Chucky was quite-a-man now but every time Miss Flea had lunch he would say "Gosh!" (meaning Gee!) "I wonder what that is."



OW these are the people who live in the Middle-of-the-Woods, who sleep by day and wake by night, and their ways are not as our ways. Verily, their ways are not as our ways.

There is Mrs. Screech Owl with a universal joint in her neck, who looks straight ahead over the middle of her back and emits exceeding melancholy yawps. And Miss Whip-poor-will who perches on a limb lengthwise instead of crosswise, just to be contrarywise, and who flits in the grouzly dusk. There is little Mr. Brown Bat, who hangs by his heels all day long and looks like an imp of Satan. Not to mention Miss Deer Mouse who lives in a tree, has long ears and large expressive eyes and who warbles, the only musician in her family and not appreciated; to say nothing of All-the-Fireflies; not forgetting Miss Moth—she of the long tongue—or the White Cricket.

At precisely the same time All-the-Fireflies lit their self-regulating phosphorescent lamps and flitted through the woods.

"There's Miss Mouse," cried they, "we really ought to ask her to sing."

"O do sing to us, Miss Mouse," said All-the-Fireflies to Miss Deer Mouse who was sitting at her front door in a hickory tree. "DO sing for us."

"Te-he! I haven't my music with me," tittered

Miss Mouse, "and really—te-he!—te-he! I have such a cold! and I haven't practised for days."

"O Miss Mouse just some little thing you know—without your notes."

"Te-he! Te-he!" tittered Miss Mouse, "it's really so damp this evening and I'm a little hoarse, but—" and Miss Mouse cleared her throat, rolled her eyes and twittered in a high key.

Then All-the-Fireflies thanked Miss Mouse most fervently and said they'd never enjoyed anything so much, and that she was so-good-and-everything and sang so easily and had such a sweet voice.

"They don't know one note from another," said Miss Mouse as All-the-Fireflies flew away and she watched the self-regulating phosphorescent lamps twinkling in the dusk. "There never was any music in that family. All they think about is carrying those everlasting lights around. 'Stravagant things! Just think of the waste."

"Look at Mrs. June Beetle," cried All-the-Fireflies. "That woman's always gadding about. Why doesn't she stay at home and look after her daughters. Poor things! They are SO plain."

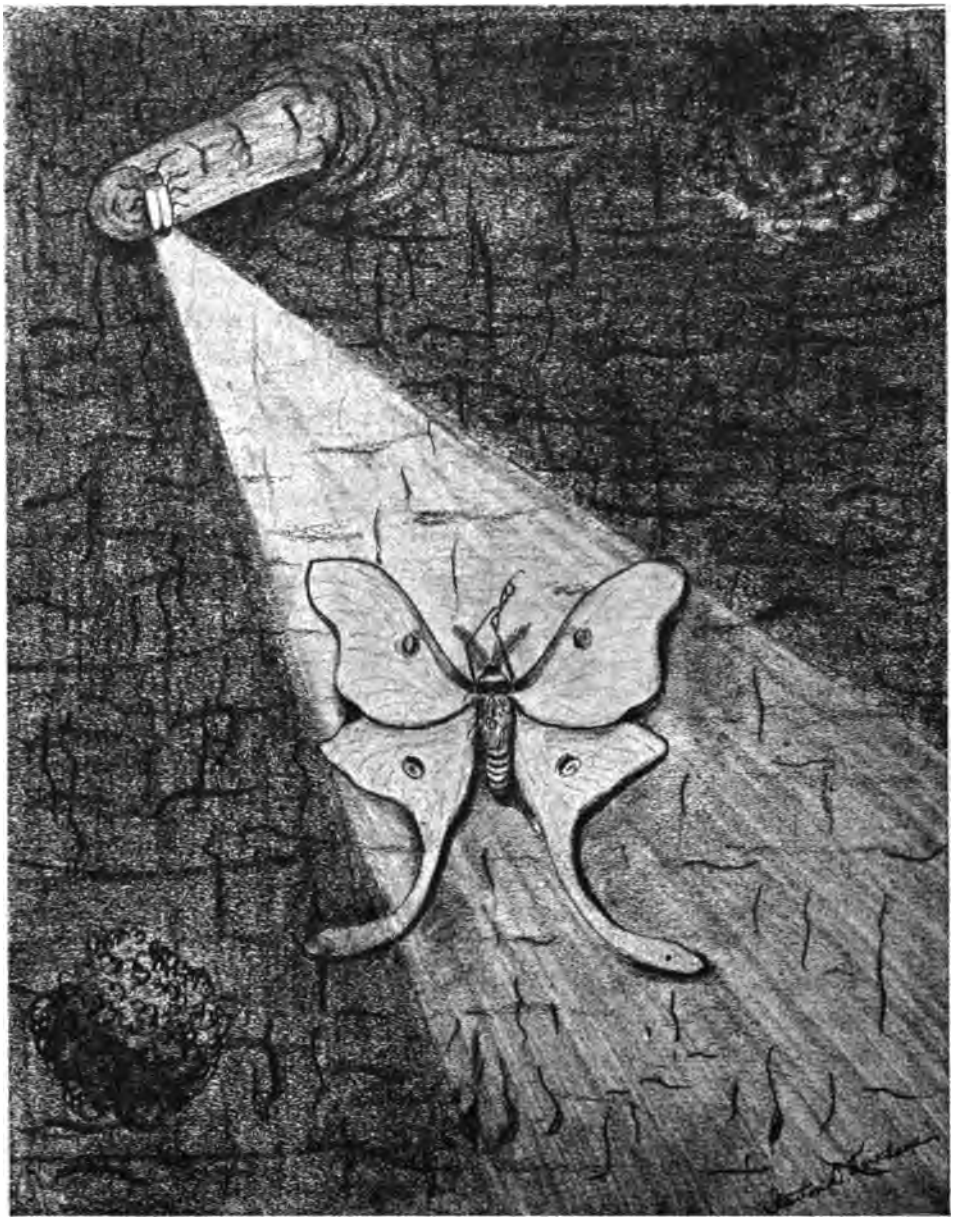
Presently Miss Moth—she of the long tongue—came humming softly over the huckleberries and rosebushes. Miss Moth is an elfy creature. Her wings are long and furry and soft and they hum as she flits in the twilight. She never goes out in the daytime, for she would be lonesome, and she has never looked

at the sun. So she sleeps under the leaves and dreams of the flowers that bloom in the night—folds her wings and dreams all day.

It is entirely owing to a sweet tooth—a family failing—that Miss Moth is so fond of these flowers; for way down in the bottom of 'em, where Miss Black Ant can't get at it, they keep a drop of sweet for her, not exactly honey, nor syrup, nor yet jam, but something very like these. Now this is much the same as a drop at the bottom of a bottle and it takes a very long tongue to reach it. Miss Moth has been reaching it for so long—in the person of her ancestors—that her tongue has grown and grown until now she has to coil it up when she flies about. When she comes to a flower she unwinds her tongue and lets it down to the bottom.

Miss Moth was flitting hither and thither and sniffing for flowers. She can smell those little syrup jugs and jam pots and honey jars afar off, but her sniffer works only at night. Before long she smelled something sweet and her tongue began to unwind of itself. It was the evening primrose at the Edge-of-the-Woods. The primroses were waiting for Miss Moth and she let down her tongue to the bottom of each flower as she hummed above it. Miss Whip-poor-will was swooping through the air in big swoops and little Mr. Brown Bat, who strongly resembles Satan, was fluttering above the tree tops.

As Miss Moth was sucking up drop after drop from



" 'Let's see!' said the firefly, turning his lamp on Miss Moth. 'Why, you'll tie another knot in it if you aren't careful. You should have had a light.' "



the evening primroses the Imp of Satan flew past and gave her an impish stare. At the same time Mrs. Screech Owl delivered herself of an exceeding melancholy yawp. Miss Moth was so startled that as she pulled her tongue hastily from the bottom of a primrose she tied it in a knot. Darting to the nearest pine tree, she clung to the bark while she tried with her front feet to untie the knot. She twisted and turned and twiddled her tongue but this only tied the knot tighter. By this time it was so dark she couldn't see what she was doing, and of course not even a brachiopod could untie a knot in the dark.

Miss Moth was all out of breath when along came a firefly with his self-regulating phosphorescent lamp and spied her twiddling her tongue and holding on to it with her front feet, as if she was playing on a little flute.

"Why, Miss Moth, what are you doing?" asked the firefly.

"Tongueth tiedth in knod and canth ged id oud," said Miss Moth wriggling away.

"Let's see!" said the firefly, turning his lamp on Miss Moth. "Why, you'll tie another knot in it if you aren't careful. You should have had a light. Go slow now and look what you are doing and you can get it out."

So the firefly sat there most civil and held a light while Miss Moth unravelled her tongue, which she finally did after much wriggling and twisting.

"What a time I've had," said she, stretching her tongue to rest it. "How could such a thing ever have happened?"

"Well, you'll feel better now," said the firefly, and he flew away to tell All-the-Fireflies how Miss Moth had tied a knot in her tongue.

But All-the-Fireflies were too excited to listen. "That perfectly horrid Screech Owl woman is eating Mrs. June Beetle!" cried they as they hurried to have a last look. Mrs. Screech Owl was sitting on a stump and gulping something down.

"Isn't it perfectly horrid!" cried All-the-Fireflies. "And what table manners!"

"Mrs. June Beetle was a good mother," said the White Cricket softly.

"Just what we've always thought," cried All-the-Fireflies.

"So patient!" said the White Cricket as Mrs. Screech Owl gave another gulp.

"So patient!" sobbed All-the-Fireflies.

"Six daughters!" said the White Cricket.

"And all so plain," All-the-Fireflies sobbed!

"What will become of them?" the White Cricket went on, as Mrs. Screech Owl gulped again.

"Poor things—such bad complexions," murmured All-the-Fireflies.

Just then Mrs. Screech Owl gave a final gulp, after which she delivered herself of an exceeding melancholy yawp and stared savagely at All-the-Fireflies who put

out their lamps and disappeared in the inky blackness, while the White Cricket crept under a leaf and very soon began playing on its little fiddle.

"Whip - poor - will! Whip - poor - will! Whip - poor will!" cried a voice.

"Always practising exercises," said Miss Deer Mouse from her doorway. "Why doesn't she learn a new piece?" and Miss Deer Mouse rolled her eyes and twittered a few high notes.

"Whip - poor - will! Whip - poor - will! Whip - poor will!" went the voice.

"Cr-r-r-r-r-r-r-oa-k! Cr-r-r-r-r-r-r-oa-k! Cr-r-r-r-r-r-r-oa-k!"

"Whip - poor - will! Whip - poor - will! Whip - poor will!"

The air was still and sizzling hot. All-the-Fireflies lit their self-regulating phosphorescent lamps again and flitted through the woods. "Everybody's out tonight," said they. "Isn't it comfy and hot?"

"And so muggy," said the White Cricket dreamily. "It's perfect. How the late Mrs. Beetle would have enjoyed this."

"Just what we were saying," cried All-the-Fireflies.

"Cr-r-r-r-r-r-r-oa-k! Cr-r-r-r-r-r-oa-k! Cr-r-r-r-r-r-r-oa-k!"

"That young tree frog is always trying to frighten folks," said Miss Deer Mouse from her doorway. "What can be the matter with him now."

"Cr-r-r-r-r-r-oa-k! Cr-r-r-r-r-r-oa-k! Cr-r-r-r-r-r-oa-k!"

"So comfy and hot!" cried All-the-Fireflies and the thousand-and-one-lamps twinkled in the pitchy-black woods while the White Cricket played softly on his fiddle and the Imp-of-Satan fluttered above the tree tops.

It was at that precise moment that all the leaves were heard to shiver.

"Cr-r-r-r-r-r-oa-k! Cr-r-r-r-r-r-oa-k! Cr-r-r-r-r-r-oa-k!

"I believe something IS going to happen," cried Miss Mouse—and then a blinkety-bright flash made the dark woods as light as day and left them pitchy-blacker than ever. In that instant Miss Deer Mouse saw the Imp-of-Satan fluttering in front of her doorway and it seemed to her that his face wore a fiendish grin. All-the-Fireflies put out their lamps and hid themselves. Miss Whip-poor-will stopped practising her exercises and the White Cricket was silent.

When the blinkety-bright flash came, Miss Deer Mouse had run into her house and she sat rubbing her little hands over her very-white front—she is of a beautiful fawn color with a spick and span white front. "It's my nerves," said she and she began to squeak in a very high key—E minor it must have been—and she squeaked PIZZICATO AGITATO. Miss Deer Mouse was growing hysterical.

Blinkety-bright and then pitchy-black it was and



"In that instan Miss Deer Mous the Imp-of-Satan fluttering in front of her doorway and it seemed to her that his face wore a fiendish grin."



the leaves shivered again. And then—and then—the Thunder Devil began to roar and to make ear-splitting noises that rumbled over the sky. And with the roaring of the Thunder Devil came the blinkety-bright flashes with jaggedy-raggedy edges and ripped up the sky from top to bottom, and even the Imp-of-Satan hid himself in the hollow of a tree and hung by his heels in token of submission. For in the Middle-of-the-Woods none dare speak when the Thunder Devil roars.

Now while the ear-splitting noises of the Thunder Devil rumbled over the sky the Great-and-Good Rain God awoke and rubbed his eyes.

"That pernickity little Thunder Devil has got the tantrums again," said he. "First thing I know he will set fire to the Middle-of-the-Woods." And with that he squeezed a cloud or two in his-own-inimitable-manner and there was the heaviest rainfall in thirty years, and all the oldest inhabitants were soaked to the skin.

"That'll fix it," said the Great-and-Good Rain God, and he put on his night cap and went to sleep again, while the water dripped from the leaves and bubbled up from the ground.

When the Thunder Devil saw that the Rain God had squeezed the clouds in his-own-inimitable-manner he went off, roaring in the distance as he went. As he reached the Edge-of-the-Woods he turned and gave one last roar that rumbled over the sky and made the dishes rattle; and then—and then—a blinkety-bright flash with jaggedy-raggedy edges came out of a corner

and slid down Miss Mouse's hickory tree into the ground with a noise like the crash of a thousand cymbals and the boom of the big bass drums.

Mrs. Screech Owl, staring savagely into the inky-blackness with her huge yellow eyes, saw a white little figure with large ears and a long tail leap into the air, and she swooped for it on her long velvet wings—and missed.

Sitting on a stump Mrs. Screech Owl delivered herself of an exceeding melancholy yawp. The Imp-of-Satan came out of his hollow tree and fluttered above the tree-tops, and one by one All-the-Fireflies lit their self-regulating phosphorescent lamps. But Miss Deer Mouse crouched in the grass and rubbed her little hands over her very-white front. "It must be my nerves," said she.

MISS MOLE'S COLD



OLD Miss Mole lived by herself in the house she was born in and had symptoms. She was afraid of fresh air, she loved the dark and her house just suited her.

"I've taken cold again," said Miss Mole one morning. "There must be some fresh air in this house. I wonder how it got in?" So she greased her nose and went to bed.

As she lay there and snuffled in the dark, Uncle Hop Toad came shuffling along.

"Why, Miss Mole, you have a cold in your head," said he.

"Guess I know it," snapped Miss Mole.

"Ain't you doing anything for it?"

"Yes I am, I greased my nose."

"You ought to take catnip for that, Miss Mole, before it gets to be chronic."

Uncle Hop Toad talked just as if he knew what he was talking about and Miss Mole believed him and decided to take catnip. So she took catnip and greased her nose again.

Then she lay there and sneezed in the dark, till Miss Meadow Mouse heard her and ran in to see what was the matter.

"Why, Miss Mole, you HAVE got a cold," said she. "You should do something for it right off."

"I've greased my nose and I'm taking catnip," said Miss Mole.

"DON'T take catnip, Miss Mole. I had a cousin, —second cousin she was—took catnip and her hair all came out. Nobody takes catnip nowadays. Tansy is the only thing for you—there's nothing like it."

So Miss Mole took tansy, greased her nose and went to bed again.

"I believe my cold's getting worse," said she, "it feels chronicky." And she snuffled and sneezed till Mr. Centipede heard her and went to see what was the trouble.

"Miss Mole, YOU'VE taken cold," said Mr. Centipede. "You need a mint julep."

"I've taken catnip, and I've stopped taking catnip, and I've taken tansy and I've greased my nose," said Miss Mole, "and I've got the snuffles worse than ever. —What makes you limp so, Mr. Centipede?"

"Rheumatism in my legs."

"Which legs, Mr. Centipede?"

"Fourteenth, twenty-second, thirty-third, and the last forty-six pairs."

"Dear me, it must be an epidemic," said Miss Mole. "I hope I won't catch it."

So Miss Mole took a mint julep, which is the most ancient remedy for colds and was used in the Ark, greased her nose and staid in bed.

And she snuffled and sneezed until Mr. Gray Squirrel, who was buryng a hickory nut, heard her

and scraped the roof off her house to see where the noise came from.

"Haven't you caught COLD, Miss Mole?" asked he as Miss Mole sneezed so that she blew a shower of dirt into the air.

"Cold, you gump! I've caught measles and whooping cough and the hookworm. Cover me up quick before I get anything else."

"Nonsense, Miss Mole! Stuff and nonsense! Fresh air is what you need. It'll cure anything. It's a great discovery."

"I haven't heard about it," said Miss Mole, "and what's more, I don't believe in these new fangled ideas. My grandmother always said fresh air would give me chills. And I don't want chills along with all the other things that's the matter with me."

"Don't you believe a word of it, Miss Mole. It'll cure you and that's the truth. My uncle's second wife lost her tail and she took fresh air and her tail grew out again—at least it would have if she hadn't —"

"Ain't it kind of poisonous?" asked Miss Mole.

"Of course not. You'll feel ever so much better if you try it, Miss Mole."

Mr. Gray Squirrel talked just as if he knew what he was talking about and Miss Mole almost believed what he said. So she greased her nose, came out of her house and took fresh air.

"I'm dretful fraid I'm going to have a chill," said she and she began to shiver.

"How are you feeling today, Miss Mole?" asked Uncle Hop Toad when he saw Miss Mole sitting in the sun.

"Poorly, thank you. I didn't get a wink of sleep last night and my nose is all stuffed up and I'm dretful fraid I'm going to have a chill."

"Seems to me you're looking a little thin," said Uncle Hop Toad. "You oughtn't to be out here in this air. You go home and take catnip."

"I did take some," said Miss Mole, "and it didn't do me any good."

"You didn't take enough. You can't expect to be cured in a minute. You must keep on taking it."

Presently Mr. Centipede came limping along.

"Why, Miss Mole, what are you doing out here in this air?"

"I'm trying the fresh air cure," Miss Mole said, "but it hasn't done me a bit of good."

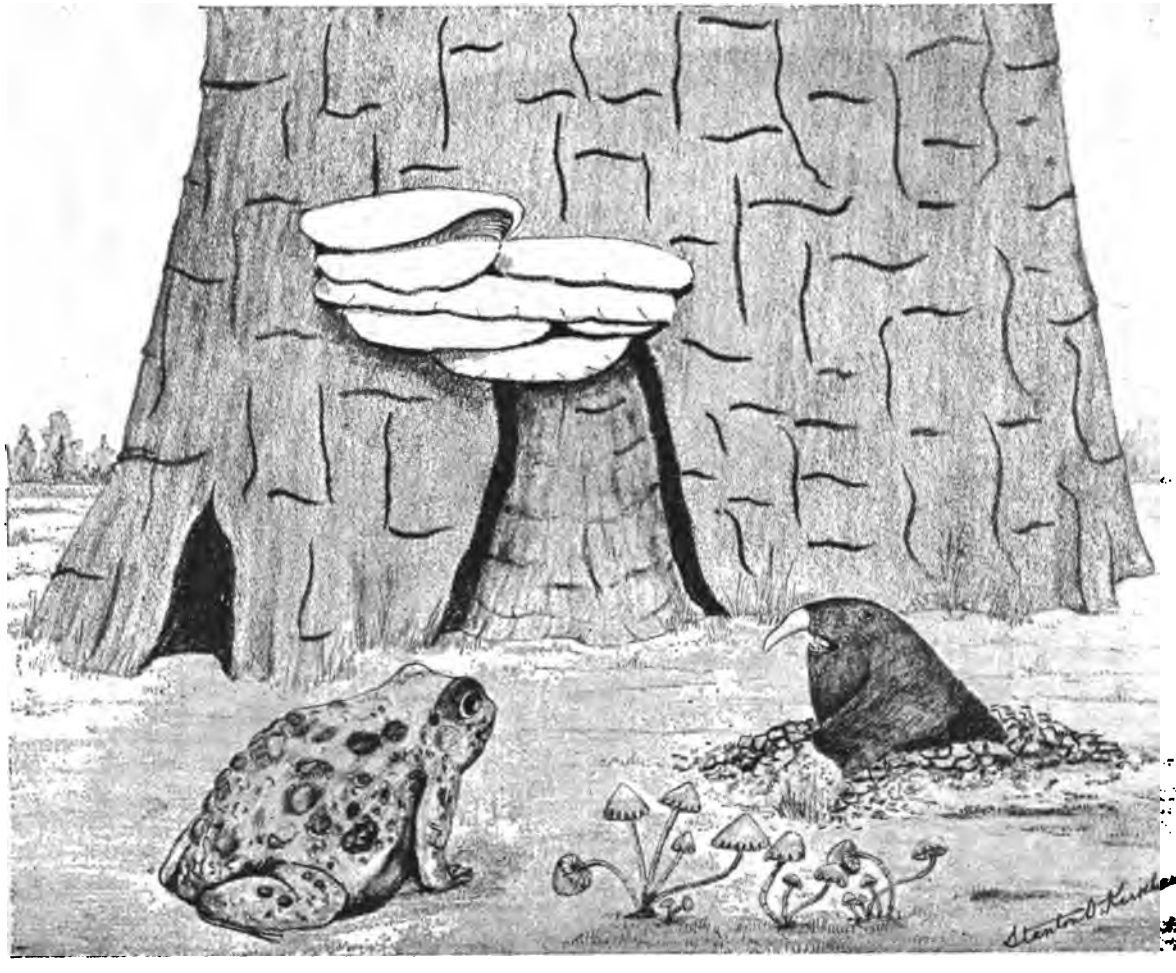
"I thought you had more sense, Miss Mole. You go home as fast as you can go and take a mint julep."

"I did take one but it upset my stummick."

"Well of course you have to get used to it. But this air is the very worst thing for anyone with a delicate nose. Aren't you looking a little thin, Miss Mole?"

"Dear me! Do you think I am? How's your rheumatism, Mr. Centipede?"

"The fourteenth's a little better, so is the thirty-third, but the last forty-six pairs pain me orful. It's



" 'Seems to me you're looking a little thin,' said Uncle Hop-Toad. 'You oughtn't to be out here in this air.' "



the air." And Mr. Centipede limped away and crawled under a rock.

"I'm glad I haven't so many legs," said Miss Mole to herself. "It must be dretful when you get rheumatism to have so many aching all at once. Why don't the mint julep cure him, I wonder?"

Miss Mole sat still a long time and had about decided to have a chill when she heard a queer dry rustle in the leaves, like something walking on its tum.

"I wonder what that is," said she, but she couldn't see anything for her eyes are so weak she can see the end of her nose only in very clear weather.

The noise stopped and then began again and Miss Mole listened and tried not to snuffle.

"I hear that you have taken a bad cold, Miss Mole," said a mellifluous voice.

"Yes I have and it hurts me to swallow, and I ache all over and I'm dretful fraid I'm going to have a chill. Who is it? I can't see anybody."

"I'll come a little nearer," said the voice. "I think I know what's the matter with you,—you're anaemic."

"I've greased my nose and I've taken catnip, and I've stopped taking catnip, and I've taken tansy and—let me see, I took a mint julep, and now I'm trying fresh air and I don't feet a bit better."

"Won't do you any good if you're anaemic," said the voice, coming nearer. "Now I can cure you, Miss

Mole. I've cured a good many colds and they always stay cured."

"I ain't going to take any more medicine—it upsets my stummick."

"Medicine won't do any good in a case like yours, Miss Mole. All you need is rest and nourishing food. I'll just come a little nearer so you can hear me."

"O I can hear you very well," said Miss Mole—and these were her last words on earth, for in another minute she was going down Mr. Black Snake head first, and her nose being greased, she slipped down quite easily.

"Do stop snuffling and blow your nose," said Mr. Black Snake when he heard her snuffling on the way down. And then the snuffles died away in the distance. Miss Mole's cold was cured.

THE CHICKADEE FAMILY



EAR the pond is a small wee stub of a tree with a small wee hole in the heart of it, and in that small wee hole Mrs. Chickadee bulit a nest, soft and comfy and very stuffy, laid her eggs—five in all—and sat on the five spiny and spiderish things that came out of them until they changed into chickadees.

Then Mr. Chickadee came and helped feed them. Their mouths were always open and their appetites were chronic and prodijjus. Mr. Chickadee hunted on the bark of the red oak tree, he hunted on the branches of the white pine tree, and he hunted on the twigs of the blue beech tree; he hunted the juniper, he hunted the shadbush and he hunted under the leaves of the high blueberry. And he brought green grubs and grouzly worms in dozens and scores and hundreds; but the mouths were always open and the appetites were chronic and prodijjus. All day long he jabbed green grubs into those yellow beaks. He filled those children's tummies; he filled their necks; he crammed them up to the eyes. Then he sat on the edge of the stump to rest for a minute.

"Why don't you feed your children?" called Mrs. Chickadee with her mouth full of worms. "Do you want them to starve?"

"Starve!" said Mr. Chickadee, "why, my dear, if they swallow another worm they'll choke."

"O don't make excuses, go and get them something to eat at once."

Mr. Chickadee ruffled up his feathers, scraped his bill and looked as if he wouldn't go—and then he went.

He hunted the leaves of the red maple tree, he hunted the trunk of the white ash, and he hunted the bark of the yellow birch tree; he hunted the sumac, he hunted the bayberry, he hunted the flowers of the hobble bush and he brought gruesome grubs and crinky crawly hijjus caterpillars of a sickly green hue. He crammed those children till they couldn't see. He stuffed them till their eyes bulged out. He jammed them so full that their mouths wouldn't shut.

"That's right," Mrs. Chickadee said. "Now go and get them something more to eat; they're hungry."

"Hungry!" cried Mr. Chickadee. "Hungry! Look at them. Their mouths won't shut, their eyes are bulging out; they are going to burst!"

"I wish you weren't so lazy. Growing children need nourishing food and plenty of it."

So Mr. Chickadee hunted the sassafras tree, he hunted the sour gum tree, he hunted the sycamore and he brought spider's eggs and wooly plant lice and filled up the chinks in those children's insides till they were air-tight and water-tight. Then he went off where Mrs. Chickadee wouldn't see him and ate an egg himself and two wooly bugs.

"That tasted like a fresh egg," said he to himself

as he scraped his bill on a twig. "I'll have another." Then he ate several more bugs—cousins they were and very wooly.

"If you could skin those bugs, they'd taste better. But I'd rather have eggs—or green ones. There's no sense in a bug with feathers. If I had just one green worm—a juicy fat one," and he started to look for a creepy, crinkly, hijjus caterpillar, when he heard the voice of Mrs. Chickadee. Mrs. Chickadee was in a turrible rage.

"Now, what's the matter?" said Mr. Chickadee. "They can't be hungry again."

But he felt that something was wrong, and then he heard Mrs. Chickadee making queer and outlandish noises and he knew what the trouble was. His small wee heart thumped against his small wee ribs as he flew to the nest.

Mrs. Chickadee was fluttering on the ground and trailing one wing in the dirt as if it were broken, while in front of the stump, his wicious black head swaying to and fro, his little forked tongue trembling in the air, was Mr. Blacksnake. This altogether atrocious serpent hears with his tongue, and he was listening; also he was hungry.

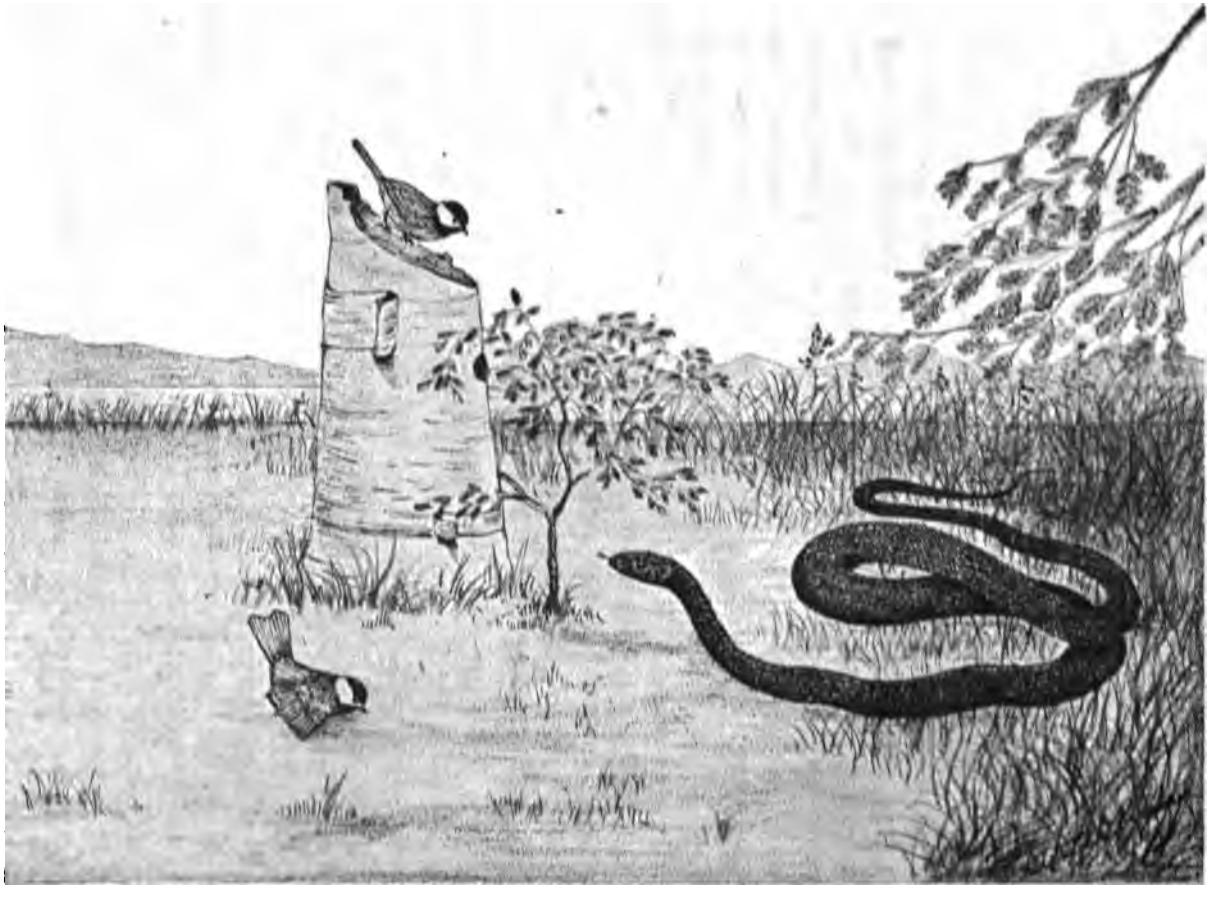
When Mr. Chickadee saw Mr. Blacksnake his feathers stood up straight all over him, which made him look like a ball, and every feather was mad. This mad ball of feathers flung itself at Mr. Blacksnake. Now that unspeakable reptile has a turrible temper

and he shook his black tail so fast that you couldn't tell where it was; he shook it so fast that it made a grey blur in the air. And he hissed like EVERYTHING and struck at the mad ball of feathers with his wicious black head and the mad ball of feathers, which was Mr. Chickadee, kept pecking at his sinful eyes.

But Mr. Chickadee was small and Mr. Blacksnake was large, and it came to pass that Mr. Chickadee grew weary and his neck ached and his wings ached and his little black eyes ached and he could hardly flutter any longer in front of Mr. Blacksnake. But that lean-and-hungry serpent never grew tired at all.

When Mrs. Chickadee saw that Mr. Chickadee's strength was failing she flopped in front of Mr. Blacksnake and trailed her wings and made all the strange noises she could think of, and some she had never thought of before, and Mr. Blacksnake took his orful eyes from Mr. Chickadee and let them fall on her like a cold draft or an evil smell. Then Mr. Chickadee fluttered to a bush for he was all in, and his head went round and his small wee heart beat against his small wee ribs like a steam hammer. And while he rested, Mrs. Chickadee flopped and hopped before Mr. Blacksnake and that horrid reptile watched but he never moved from the stump, till at last Mrs. Chickadee lost her wind and HER head went round and her small wee heart beat against her small wee ribs.

Seeing this, Mr. Chickadee flew into a just rage and hurled himself at Mr. Blacksnake again, pecking at



"Mrs. Chickadee was fluttering on the ground and trailing one wing in the dirt as if it were broken."



his eyes while Mr. Blacksnake took a mouthful of feathers and his tail made a grey blur in the air. But Mr. Chickadee was very tired and his small wee heart was thumping so that he could only feebly peck at the sinful eyes, so Mrs. Chickadee once more flopped and made strange noises. Now SHE was growing feeble and it looked sad and glummish for the Chickadees, for their heads ached and their wings ached and their little tummies were empty.

Mr. Blacksnake saw and was pleased and his stony eyes fell upon them both like a cold draft or an evil smell, and for a moment his tail lay still upon the ground.

You could have heard a pin-feather drop—while Mr. Blacksnake's long thin tongue darted out and trembled like a little flickering flame. He was listening. Suddenly from across the pond came the deep down voice of Mr. Dog. Mr. Dog was running with his nose to the ground on the trail of Little Bun.

When Mr. Blacksnake heard Mr. Dog his tail made a blur in the air AND he began to strike at the stump in the most perfectly hijjus and ferociable manner.

Mr. Dog saw Mr. Blacksnake and growled and snarled a turrible snarl, like this: G-r-r-r-r-h!!!—— a-r-r-r-r-r-a-hh!!! Then he jumped on Mr. Blacksnake and gave him spinal trouble on top and tummy trouble underneath by reason of being squoze orful. And Mr. Blacksnake punctured him in his chocolate nose with his long, thin and exceeding sharp teeth, just to show

how HE felt about it. For awhile you couldn't tell which was dog and which was snake and Mr. Blacksnake got more spinal trouble in his back and Mr. Dog more punctures in his chocolate nose. Mr. and Mrs. Chickadee were too excited to talk, so they just held on by their toes and watched the scrap, AND the five children nearly expired by reason of their chronic and prodijjus appetites.

Mr. Blacksnake was so long and thin and slippery and snakery and whipped himself about in such a very straordinary fashion that Mr. Dog couldn't hold him down; and Mr. Dog was so powerful-big that Mr. Blacksnake just longed for a change of air and his spinal trouble hurt him orful. The very first chance he had he put another puncture in Mr. Dog's chocolate nose which most let the wind out of Mr. Dog and then he whipped himself out from under his paws and left that locality like a long thin streak of lightning—he felt so much in need of a change.

Mr. Dog wiped the punctures in his chocolate nose most carefully with his large hairy paws and took up the trail of the rabbit; while from that small wee hole in that small wee stub of a tree came five distinct cries for help from five absolutely empty children.

So Mr. Chickadee hunted the bark of the blue beech tree, he hunted the leaves of the white oak tree, he hunted the branches of the black ash tree, and he brought gruesome grubs and creepy, crawly hijjus caterpillars. He brought them in dozens, he brought them

in scores, he brought them in hundreds and jabbed them into those hollow children, till their necks were full, their eyes bulged out and their mouths wouldn't shut.

THE TAIL OF OLD MAN MUSKRAT



OLD Man Muskrat had a tail that was flattish and he could swim under water like a fish. When he dove he used to hit the water a whack with his flattish tail that could be heard for exactly a mile, more or less,—BIFF!!!

All his life he had lived in the pond; his grandfather had lived there and his great grandfather and all his other grandfathers, too numerous to mention. They ALL believed it was the best pond in Creation and the cleanest and most sloobrious; and they all believed that the muskrats that lived in other ponds were meaner than skunks, which of course they were.

Old Man Muskrat and his grandfathers, too numerous to mention, had always had a house and garden in the pond. It was a squdgy garden and in the middle of it was a squdgy house—for that is the only kind that is damp enough for a muskrat. He must live where it is slippery and slushy and he can get his feet wet. All little muskrats are taught to get their feet wet so they won't catch cold—and that is only common sense, you know.

The door of this house was under water, so that the house was perfectly damp, and Old Man Muskrat used to leave this squdgy house by the perfectly damp door-

way and swim around over the oozy bottom of the pond, and paddle through the slushy-squshy cattails.

In the squdgy garden he dug the roots of spatterdocks and while he dug for roots he would sometimes dig out Mr. Mussel, who lives in a blue shell at the bottom of the pond, and eat him raw, leaving his blue shell on the bank.

He had built his house of roots and stems of things that grew in his squdgy garden, like spatterdock and cattail and arrowhead, and every year when the maples were red in the swamp he patched up his house which looked like a small haystack. Then in the winter time he would eat the inside because, you see, being a rat-nosed flat-tailed quadruped, he had made it of things that were good to eat, and so he lived in it like a mouse in a cheese—only he was careful to keep his feet wet.

Now, Old Man Muskrat was a great swimmer and he used to cavort about that pond in the most SENSATIONAL manner, which surprised Miss Mud Turtle and amazed young Mr. Water Snake and stonished all the little fish. For he splashed and spattered and blew bubbles with his nose, and when he dove he hit the water with his tail that was flattish, a whack that could be heard just one mile—more or less—BIFF!!!

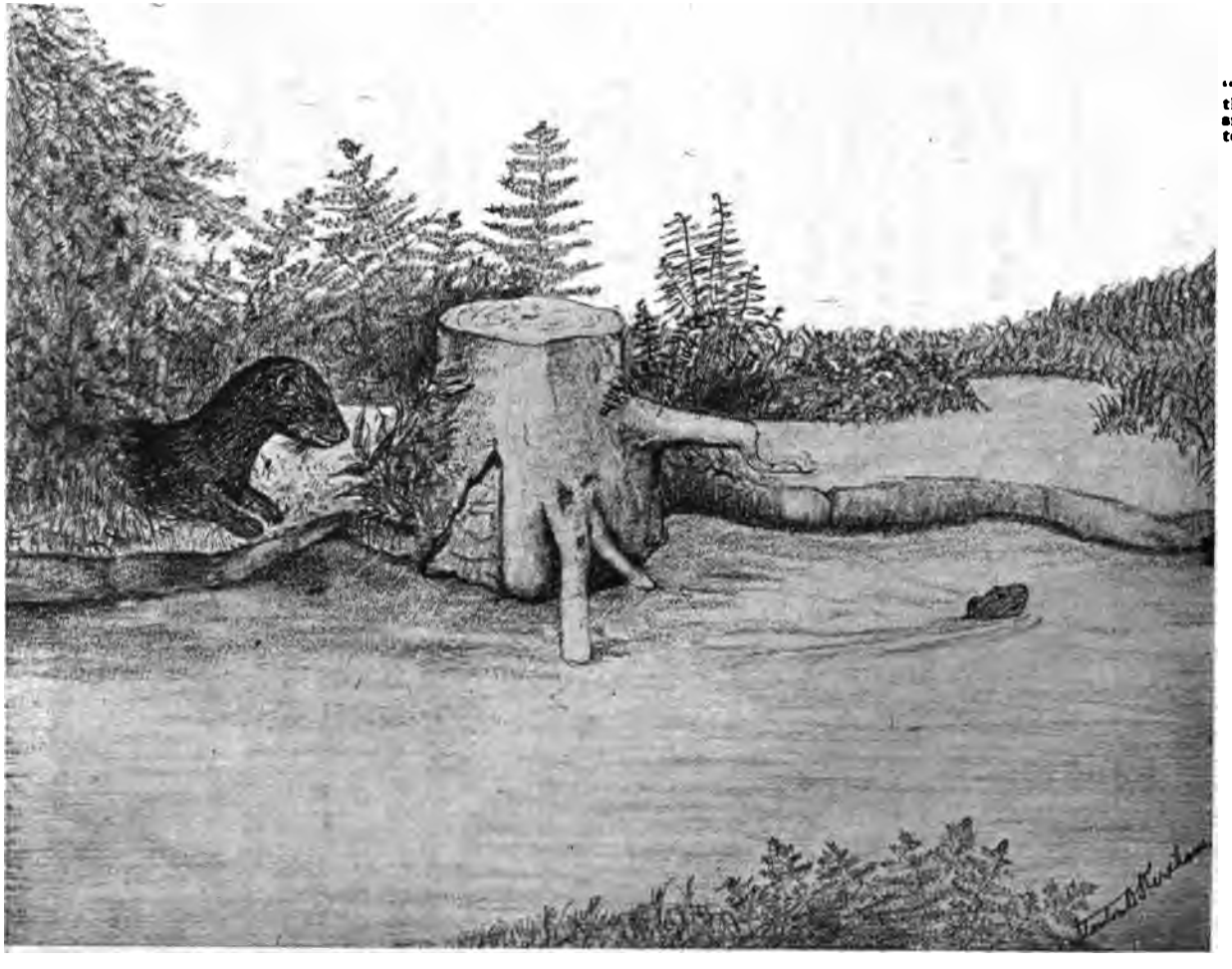
On the evening of the fifth day of the Turtle moon he was splashing about and blowing bubbles in precisely the manner referred to. The sky was cloudy and the wind due East. The general aspect of the pond was grouzly and that is to say, grizzible. In fact it was

glummish, and the more glummish it grew the better Old Man Muskrat liked it. He was blowing bubbles as I say, all alone in the dusk and feeling perfectly damp and comfy and just musing himself.

At the same time Mr. Barred Owl was musing HIMself in the swamp and singing a little spring song like this: "WHOO—WHOO—WHOO !.....WHOO—WHOO—! WHOO—AHHH ! ! " Old Man Muskrat felt creepy in his spinal column when he heard Mr. Barred Owl singing his little spring song but it sounded just one mile away—more or less—that being the exact distance—so he went on musing himself. He climbed up the bank and dove into the pond and hit the water a-slap with his flattish tail—BIFF!!! which was an error, a gregious error such as only a rat-nosed quadruped can make, for the wind was due East.

When Mr. Barred Owl heard that slap of a flattish tail he slipped off the branch where he was singing his little spring song and flew through the woods with no more sound than a shadow would make. Old Man Muskrat couldn't hear a shadow and of course he couldn't hear a spook like Mr. Barred Owl. Neither did he see him, he was so busy musing himself—till Mr. Barred Owl flitted out of the dusk and caught the tip end of his tail as he was diving into the pond. Old Man Muskrat pulled and Mr. Barred Owl pulled like everything. Something had to happen, and it did—the tip of the tail came off.

That was once.



"He glided through the bushes like a snake till he came to the pond."



It hurt Old Man Muskrat's feelings to lose the tip of his tail like that and he stayed in his squdgy home in the squdgy garden till it mended itself, which it did —but it looked stumpy. Then he dove into the pond again and hit the water a whack with his stumpy tail— BIFF!!! that could be heard for half a mile.

That was another gregious error. For Mr. Mink was prowling in the woods and when he heard that whack, just one-half a mile away, more or less—that being the exact distance—he glided through the bushes like a snake till he came to the pond. When he saw Old Man Muskrat cavorting and musing himself he slipped into the water behind him.

Old Man Muskrat saw him just in time and dove, but Mr. Mink caught the tip of his stumpy tail. Old Man Muskrat pulled and Mr. Mink gnawed and the tip of the tail came off.

That was twice.

Old Man Muskrat went back to his squdgy house in his squdgy garden and stayed there till his tail mended again, which it did, but it was only a stump now. Then he yearned to hit the water once more with that stump; he just yearned to do it—and he did. He hit it a smack—biff!!!—that could be heard for a quarter of a mile, and this was still another gregious error such as a rat-nosed quadruped so frequently makes.

For Mr. Fox was loping along and when he heard the sound of that tail, just one quarter of a mile away

—more or less—that being the exact distance—he crept down to the pond as quiet as a mouse and scouched in the grass. When Old Man Muskrat climbed up the bank he stayed just long enough to leave the stump of his tail in Mr. Fox's mouth.

That was three times.

Old Man Muskrat felt naked and ashamed without his tall and thenceforth and forever after he stayed in his squdgy garden and dreamed of the good old days when he used to hit the water a slap with his tall—BIFF!!! that surprised Miss Mud Turtle and amazed young Mr. Water Snake and stonished all the little fish.

LITTLE BUN



LITTLE BUN was a small child—a rabbit's child, you know—but he was exceeding wise for one so young. He could see with his eyes and hear with his ears and smell with his nose. His nose was the wisest part of him: it knew everything that a nose can know, and it always wobbled. But he was just as lone as lone could be, this rabbit's child. You see, he had had a dear Ma and Pa, but Mr. Fox had eaten them and he hadn't left a hair. Bun never knew what had happened to them and, being a cocious child, he went on wobbling his nose and taking care of himself. He had to wobble to keep from crying. If his dear Ma and Pa had wobbled their noses more they would have smelled Mr. Fox, and if they had smelled Mr. Fox their legs would just naturally have run away with them.

Of course, Little Bun did cry some when he couldn't find his Ma and Pa. He scouched down in the grass and the tears trickled down his cocious nose in a little stream that fell on Mr. Grasshopper, who was dozing among the leaves and thought it was raining.

"It's only a shower," murmured Mr. Grasshopper, and he kicked out his legs and landed on a grass stem close to the cocious nose of Little Bun, down which a tear went trickle, trickle.

"Dear me," said Mr. Grasshopper, "What's the matter?"

"I've lost my Ma and Pa," sobbed Little Bun.

"Never had any," said Mr. Grasshopper. "What is it, anyhow?"

"Never had any Ma and Pa?" asked Little Bun, sitting up and wobbling his nose. "Why what did you do when you were little?"

"Just what I'm doing now, of course. Hopped around and enjoyed myself."

"Without any Ma and Pa?"

"Never had such a thing," said Mr. Grasshopper. "How do you make rain come out of your eyes like that? —I can't do it."

"It just comes," replied Little Bun. "Don't you cry when you feel bad?"

"Nope! I hop!" and with that Mr. Grasshopper hopped away—for his legs won't stay still; even though his head settles down somewheres, his legs hop off with it.

Little Bun sat there a long time wobbling his nose and wondering what he should do without his dear Ma and Pa.

"Perhaps," said he, thinking of Mr. Grasshopper, "I'd better hop."

Being a cocious child he looked at things in a cocious way. Though small for his age, he was old for his size. He might have been sitting there yet if his little tum hadn't said it was hungry. When tum's



"And thereupon and thereafter this lone Little Bun danced by his lone little self by the light of the lonely moon."



hungry, nose wobbles to see who's prowling and nose is a great smeller. It can smell the wind changing and the grass growing. Bun could tell which way Mr. Fox was looking. Only a very cocious nose can do that.

As nose smelled no fox looking that way, tum said to pats—hop! and pats hopped to where tender young things were growing and thereupon tum was fed.

Little Bun being greatly refreshed wondered what he should do next, and pats said—Let us dance! So nose wobbled and having smelled no evil, pats began to caper. Front pats are twins and hind pats are twins, but the twins never dance together. One twin hind pat dances with one twin front pat, and t'other twin hind pat dances with t'other twin front pat and they have a most scrumptious time in a bunnyish way.

And thereupon and thereafter this lone Little Bun danced by his lone little self by the light of the lonely moon. But always nose wobbled and Bun never danced if Mr. Fox was looking that way.

His dear Ma and Pa had given Bun lessons in nibbling and gnawing which are most important things for a rabbit's child to learn. Every morning early Bun hopped in the cat-brier thicket where he lived and gnawed and ggnawed and gggnawed, merely for practise and to keep his teeth sharp. The trick was to cut the stems off clean and not prick his cocious nose on the thorns. After awhile he gnawed runways for himself all through the cat-briers. These runways were just big

enough for a small child and no dog could get through them at all. From the cat-briers they led to a brush heap near by where his bed was hidden so carefully no one but Miss Black Ant knew it was there. Even Mr. Fox didn't suspect it, for he could never get through the cat-briers to follow the scent.

Mr. Dog and Mr. Fox could smell Little Bun and Little Bun could smell Mr. Dog and Mr. Fox, but being a remarkably remarkable child, he always smelled them first. Mr. Dog had a dog-smell and Mr. Fox had a fox-smell and Little Bun had a rabbit-child's smell and wherever they went they always took their smells with them, like their shadows, but they got loose in the air and went floating about; and that's why their noses wobbled to see whose smell was coming. Of course, shadows never get loose in this way.

At times the wind took Little Bun's smell and carried it up in the air where Mr. Fox's nose couldn't get it, and again the rain spread it over the ground so he couldn't tell where it came from. But when the wind was blowing from the right quarter it would take Little Bun's smell straight to Mr. Fox's nose, and sometimes it took Mr. Fox's smell and blew it to Little Bun's nose where he was hiding in the brush pile, and whenever that smell came floating around the cocious nose of Little Bun, his ears would lie flat. Then he would scouch down and just naturally frustrate Mr. Fox—indeed he would, he'd FRUStrate him.

Now Mr. Fox knew that was a cocious rabbit's

child and he was so anxious for a taste of rabbit that he used to lie awake during the day thinking about it. Having eaten Little Bun's dear Ma and Pa he had a liking for the family.

But Little Bun frustrated him—he did indeed, and it happened this way. That cocious child was dancing one evening and twin pats were having a most scrumptious time when nose caught the smell of Mr. Fox coming that way and, coming right after it, the smell of Mr. Dog. Little Bun knew that Mr. Fox was mighty anxious for a taste of rabbit and he knew Mr. Dog was equally anxious for a taste of fox, so he lay back his ears and wobbled his nose and did some thinking, bunnywise.

Mr. Fox's smell was coming fast and right after it was Mr. Dog's smell, and it seemed as if Mr. Dog's smell was coming a little faster than Mr. Fox's. Soon Little Bun began to hear Mr. Dog's big voice and he knew Mr. Fox must be near. So that rabbit's child popped out of the briers and sat up as if he had come to take the air. But his ears were lying mighty flat. When he smelled exactly where Mr. Fox was he scuffled his pats a little and began to dance.

Mr. Fox was loping along keeping about so far ahead of Mr. Dog, when his nose caught the smell of a rabbit's child, and suddenly there was the child himself hopping around in the bushes. Mr. Fox licked his chops and his nose was so full of the smell of Little Bun that he forgot the smell of Mr. Dog.

Peeping out of the corner of his eye, Little Bun saw Mr. Fox creeping up, but he kept on dancing as if he was having a scrumptious time and didn't know he was anywhere about, and Mr. Fox laughed to see that Bunny hop.

While he was laughing to himself and creeping up to Little Bun, Mr. Dog's smell came so close it froze his blood and made all the hairs of his back stand on end; and right after Mr. Dog's smell came Mr. Dog himself.

Little Bun saw Mr. Dog coming down the hill and scouched in the grass as if he was going to rest himself. That was the time when Mr. Dog just naturally lit on Mr. Fox and when he had his teeth in his throat he asked him most scroobious and polite, would he kindly allow him to have a taste of fox—but Mr. Fox was thinking of other things and never answered Mr. Dog.

Mr. Dog had caught Mr. Fox near the cat-briers where Little Bun lived and now Mr. Fox was gone, but his smell hung around and made the rabbit's child most uncomfy. It looked as if Mr. Fox had left his smell there to get even with Little Bun.

MR. DOG ACQUIRES KNOWLEDGE



R. DOG was young and there were a few things that he didn't know, but he didn't know that he didn't know them, and this is the really-truly truth.

But as time went on, Mr. Dog acquired knowledge and learned some of the things that Little Bun had always known. Yes, he surely acquired knowledge and gained wisdom, for it came to pass that Mr. Skunk and Old Man Porcupine gave him instruction, they did indeed; and he always remembered what they taught him and continued greatly enlightened, and this also is the really-truly truth.

Mr. Dog liked to prowl in the woods and frighten Little Bun and chase Mr. Squirrel's children up a tree and talk with his big voice and let everybody know he was Mr. Dog and that those woods belonged to him. He was young, you see, and he didn't know he had anything to learn. So he ran around all day with his nose to the ground and when somebody's smell would come his way he'd holler as loud as he could—"I'm Mr. Dog!—Here I come! Look at me!"

One day he smelled an entirely new smell and off he went through the woods hollering at the top of his lungs. Now that smell belonged to Old Man Porcupine,

who was rambling over a pile of rocks and enjoying himself. Old Man Porcupine moves very slowly and NEVER hurries. Pretty soon he heard Mr. Dog's big voice down in the hollow.

"There's that fool dog," said he, and went on enjoying himself as if he didn't care anything about Mr. Dog.

Mr. Dog came up on the run and he was as excited as a bee in a tar bucket. When he saw Old Man Porcupine, if his skin hadn't been sewed on tight he would have jumped clean out of it as he started in to show him he was Mr. Dog.

But Old Man Porcupine wasn't interested. He never hurried and he was never excited. He merely looked at Mr. Dog and said—"Pooh!" like that, "Pooh!" and turned his back.

When Mr. Dog sprang at him with his mouth open he just slapped his tail over Mr. Dog's face—so, as if he was dusting it.

"Go home, you fool pup! Go home to your Ma!" said he, as he ambled away over the pile of rocks.

Mr. Dog's face looked like a prickly pear or a paper of pins. His chocolate nose was stuck full of quills, his mouth was full of quills and every quill hurt him TURRIBLE. He whimpered and whined and he howled and he yelped, and then he put his tail between his legs and started for home. Every little while he had to stop and pull out some of those quills, and he rubbed his chocolate nose on the grass and rolled and scratched

and wiggled and squirmed till he wore the quills off his nose. But the ones in his mouth hurt him most particular because his mouth was so full it wouldn't shut.

So he ran through the woods yelping, and everybody knew something had happened to Mr. Dog and that it hurt him most particular.

Old Man Porcupine heard him away off in the woods and he said—"Mr. Dog's learned something today. Hear him saying his lesson."

And Little Bun popped his head out of his brush pile and called: "What's the matter, Mr. Dog?"

Then Mr. Chickadee hollered at him: "What's happened, Mr. Dog?"

But Mr. Dog's mouth was so full of quills he couldn't talk and every little while he had to lie down in the grass and chew those quills and scrape them with his paws; and so he chewed and scraped and chewed and scraped for three days and three nights till he got them out of his mouth. Then he went to the pond and cooled his face in the water, and as he sat there cooling himself and drinking the water and thinking about what he had learned, he found that he had acquired knowledge and was greatly enlightened on the subject of Mr. Porcupine. And he thought that surely now he knew everything there was to know.

So it happened that when he was roaming through the woods and came across Mr. Skunk one day, he looked at Mr. Skunk's tail and seeing it was not like

that of Old Man Porcupine, but a perfectly-harmless tail, he thought to himself that he would show Mr. Skunk that he was Mr. Dog.

Mr. Skunk was teetering through the woods on his uncommonly short legs, hunting for beetles. He looked as innocent as a kitten and his tail was perfectly-harmless. And this is the really-truly truth.

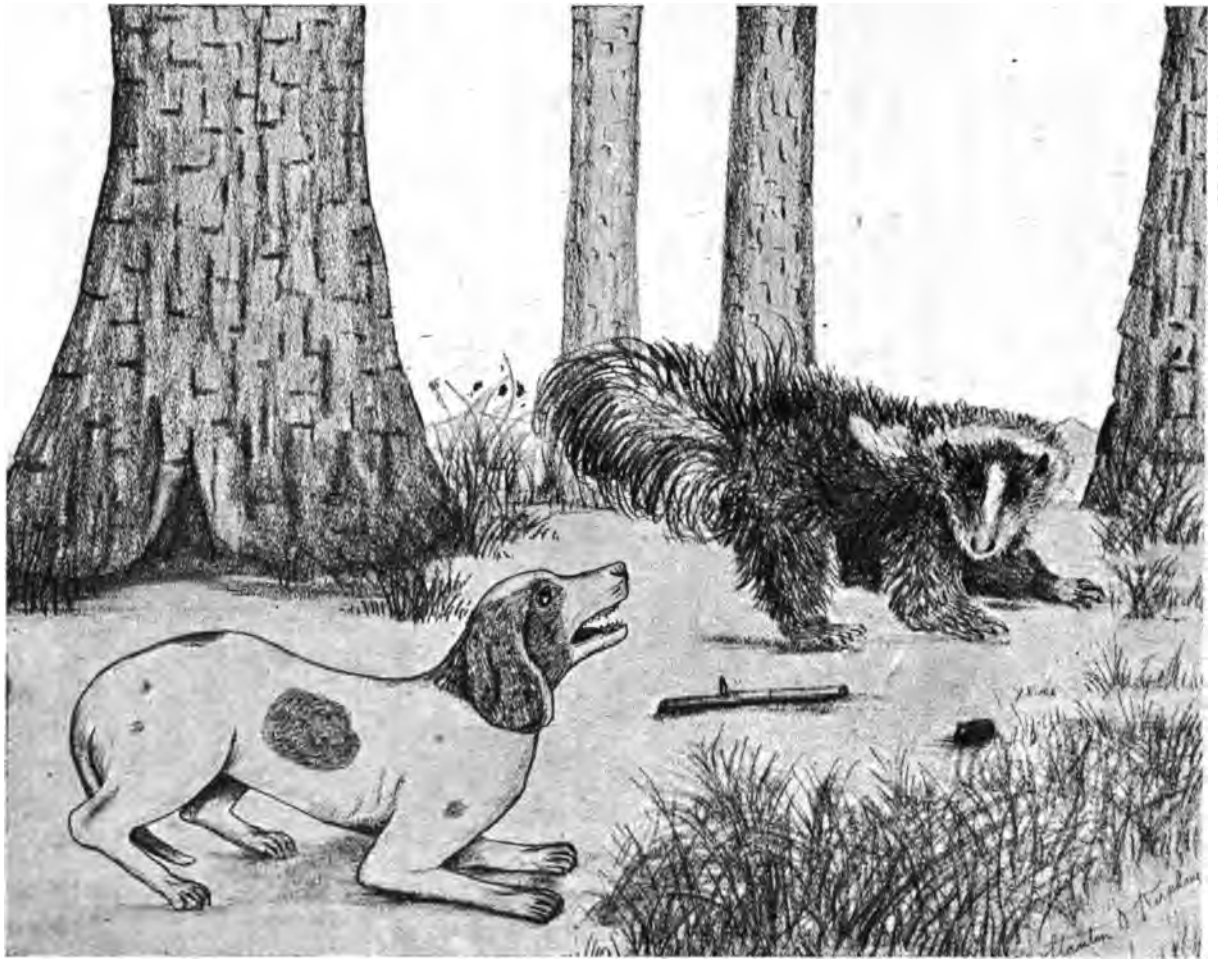
So Mr. Dog lifted up his big voice—"I'm Mr. Dog! Here I come! Look at me!"

Mr. Skunk heard him and went on teetering through the woods on his uncommonly short legs, looking for beetles. He was pulling the bark off of an old stump when Mr. Dog appeared, and just then he saw a large fat grubby beetle and he turned his back on Mr. Dog while he collected it. Then he looked over his shoulder in a most leisurely manner.

Mr. Dog not knowing that he had anything more to learn, expected Mr. Skunk to climb a tree like any other cat, and when Mr. Skunk looked at him in this leisurely fashion he was stonished—stonished. And right then and there Mr. Dog acquired knowledge and gained wisdom and was greatly enlightened on the subject of Mr. Skunk.

For when he went to take Mr. Skunk's skin without asking his leave, Mr. Skunk just smiled and said most leisurely: "Wait a minute, Mr. Dog! Here's something for you," and handed him some perfumery of a special kind that's made for Mr. Skunk.

Mr. Dog was in such a hurry that he got it in his



"And right then and there Mr. Dog acquired knowledge and gained wisdom and was greatly enlightened on the subject of Mr. Skunk."



eyes and up his nose and it made him holler as if he had put his head in a wasp's nest. It burned his nose and blinded him and made him sea-sick, this special perfumery of Mr. Skunk's.

"Here's some more," Mr. Skunk said, and he sprinkled Mr. Dog all over with his special perfumery. "I've got plenty of it. How do you like it, Mr. Dog?"

But Mr. Dog rolled on the ground and choked and sputtered and coughed and sneezed. Little Bun heard him and Old Man Porcupine heard him and Mr. Chickadee and they all said—"Mr. Skunk has been giving Mr. Dog lessons."

Mr. Dog waited three days and three nights before he could open his eyes and then he went home to get his breakfast. When he saw his dear Ma he tried to wag his tail and look as if he hadn't been taking lessons of Mr. Skunk, but his dear Ma smelled Mr. Skunk's special perfumery, growled and showed her teeth and said, "Shoo! you silly pup! you smell to heaven."

With his tail between his legs, Mr. Dog went over to his friend the Bull Terrier, but when he smelled the special perfumery the Bull Terrier snarled and stood on his back legs—"Don't come near me, you fool dog, you smell like an automobile," growled he.

Then Mr. Dog went and rolled in the mud, soaked himself in the pond and returned to his dear Ma, wagging his tail hopefully. But she smelled him afar off and growled most ferociable and that took all the

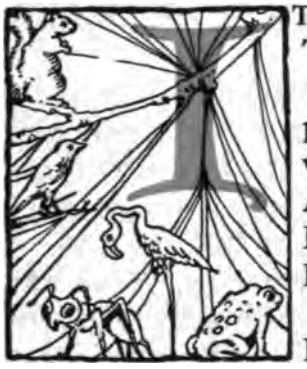
wag out of his tail and he slunk away and howled like mad.

Little Bun heard him and Old Man Porcupine heard him and Mr. Chickadee heard him and they knew that Mr. Dog was studying his lessons. Then his smell got mixed up with the smell of Mr. Skunk and pervaded the air—and they all said "Wheee--ew!!!"

Thereupon Mr. Dog crawled off in the woods and hid himself for three weeks and meditated. When he came back his skin didn't fit him, his ribs were all on the outside and his tail wouldn't wag, but the special perfumery of Mr. Skunk had worn off and Mr. Dog had acquired knowledge and gained wisdom and was greatly enlightened.

And this is the really-truly truth.

THE COMMITTEE ON MORALS



T'S going to rain," said Uncle Hop Toad.

"I don't know about that," replied Grandfather Bull Frog. "It won't do to decide things off hand. At the next meeting of the Society I will refer it to the Committee on Rain."

"What's the use?" asked Uncle Hop Toad. "It's raining now. Can't you see it?"

"That may be! That may be! But we can't feel sure of a thing until we've voted on it."

"Vote if you want to," said Uncle Hop Toad, "I'm going to hunt for pill bugs. I'm hungry."

"How's the hunting?" asked Grandfather Bull Frog.

"Fair. I got a big one yesterday. He was a beautiful bug and as tender as a worm."

"Those Toads are a queer lot," said Grandfather Bull Frog to himself as he plumped into the pond. "Not one of them has ever served on a committee. The idea of his trying to decide a question like that."

"Mornin', Grandfather Bull Frog."

"Mornin', Mr. Yellow Belly. I saw Uncle Hop Toad just now and he said it was going to rain. What do you think of that?"

"You don't say so!" exclaimed Mr. Yellow Belly, shaking the water from his shiny green head.

"Yes he did," replied Grandfather Bull Frog, blinking his big round eyes, which stuck out of his head like door knobs. "At the meeting today we'll refer it to the Committee on Rain. I have a matter of the gravest importance to bring before the Society."

"Important! By Golly! By Golly! By Golly!" croaked all the frogs as they hurried to the meeting and scrambled on to the lilypads.

"Call the roll, Mr. Pop Eye," said Grandfather Bull Frog.

"Mr. Ragged Breeches," began Mr. Pop Eye. "Mr. Yellow Belly, Mr. Goggles, Mr. Greenback, Mr. Web Foot, Mr. Pop Eye, Mr. Pop Eye, I say. Where's Mr. Pop Eye? Anybody seen Pop Eye? O he's me, isn't he? Yes, to be sure, I'm him," and Mr. Pop Eye went on until he had called all the names.

"The meeting will come to order," said Grandfather Bull Frog, clearing his throat and looking most-orful solemn. The members of the Society cleared their throats and looked most-orful solemn.

"I wish to call the attention of the members of this Society to a matter of the gravest—the very gravest importance to the race," continued Grandfather Bull Frog.

"There's going to be a race," whispered Mr. Goggles excitedly to Mr. Greenback.

"Fellow frogs," said Grandfather Bull Frog, looking more-than-usual solemn, "the question concerns the morals of this Community."

"Morals! By Golly! By Golly! By Golly!" croaked the fellow frogs.

"And I move," said Grandfather Bull Frog, "that we appoint a committee on morals to look into the matter and report."

"Report! By Golly! By Golly! By Golly!" croaked the fellow frogs again.

"I nominate," continued Grandfather Bull Frog, "our fellow frog, Mr. Yellow Belly."

"Yellow Belly! Yellow Belly! Yellow Belly!"

"And Mr. Ragged Breeches."

"Ragged Breeches! Ragged Breeches! Ragged Breeches, too!"

"And Mr. Pop Eye."

"Pop Eye! By Golly! By Golly! By Golly!"

"I'm on the Committee on Rain," said Mr. Pop Eye, "I haven't time for rain and morals too."

"O yes you have. Think of your duty to your fellow frogs, Mr. Pop Eye."

"Well, then we must elect a chairman," said Mr. Pop Eye to the other committeemen.

"What's that?" asked Mr. Ragged Breeches.

"I don't know exactly," answered Mr. Pop Eye, "but it's always the fattest one, you know."

"No it isn't," said Mr. Yellow Belly. "It's the oldest. That's me. I'm elected."

"You talk like a pollywog," said Mr. Pop Eye. "It's always the fattest one. That's me—I'm elected, ain't I, Mr. Ragged Breeches?"

Mr. Ragged Breeches winked one large round eye and then t'other large round eye, and then both large round eyes and looked most-orful solemn. "You're the fattest," said he, "and Mr. Yellow Belly here, he's the oldest—that's true. But it should be the one with the biggest mouth. That's me—I'm elected."

"You're a liar," croaked Mr. Pop Eye.

"Who's a liar?"

"You're a liar."

"Liar! Liar! Liar!" croaked all three together.

"The committee's at work already," said Grandfather Bull Frog. "Hear 'em?"

"Hard at it," said he next morning to Mr. Yellow Belly. "When will the report be ready?"

"Yellow-bellied tadpole!"

"Pop-eyed pollywog!"

"Liar! Liar! Liar!" croaked the committee.

"We have to elect a chairman first," said Mr. Yellow Belly. "We're holding the election now."

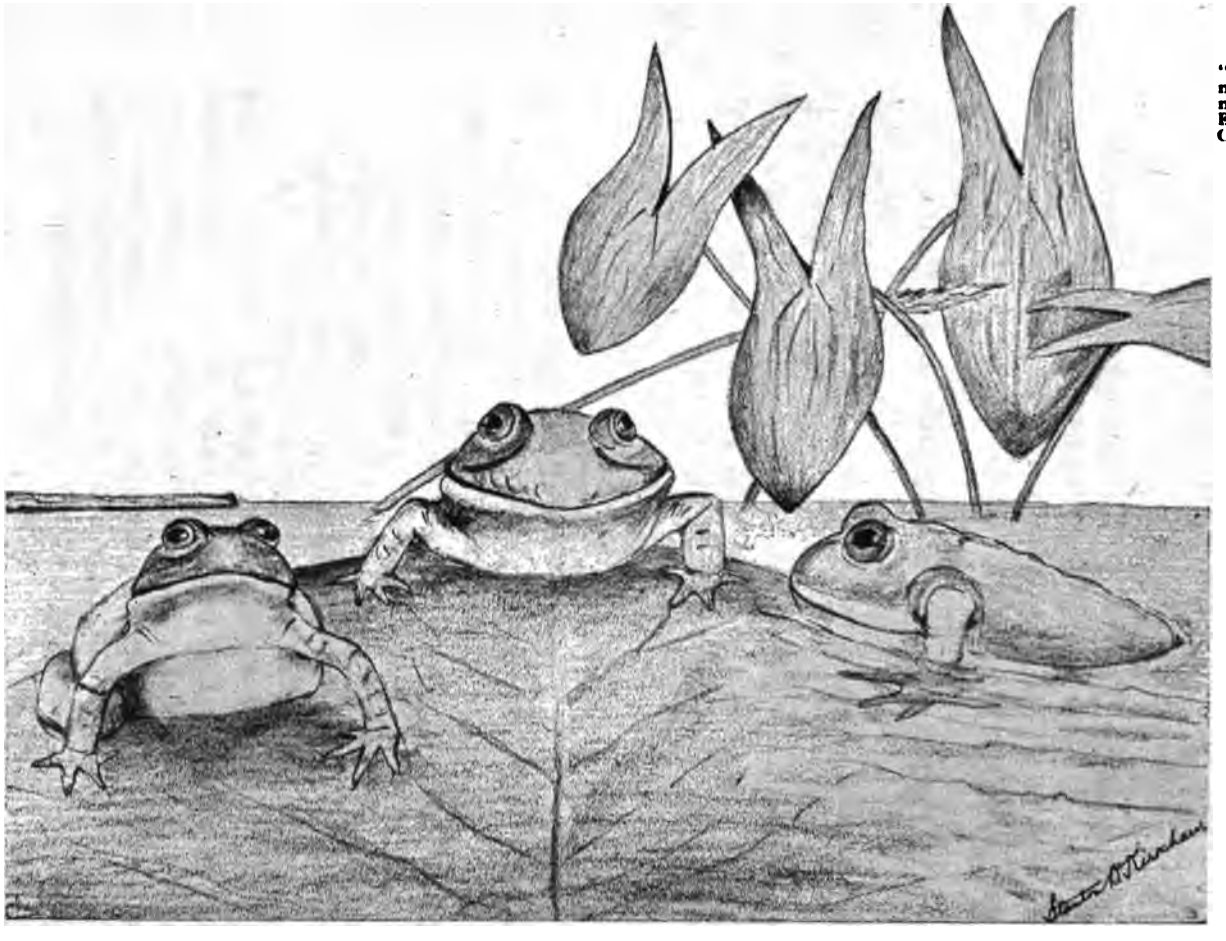
"Who's going to be elected?" asked Grandfather Bull Frog.

"Not that yellow-bellied tadpole," croaked Mr. Pop Eye.

"Nor that pop-eyed pollywog," shouted Mr. Yellow Belly.

"This is a very exciting election," said Grandfather Bull Frog, clearing his throat. "The votes must be counted. Who do you vote for, Mr. Yellow Belly?"

"I vote for Yellow Belly—dear old Yellow Belly."



" 'Well, then we must elect a chairman,' said Mr. Pop Eye to the other Committeemen."



"I vote for Pop Eye—honest Pop Eye," said Mr. Pop Eye.

"I vote for Ragged Breeches," said he of that name, blowing bubbles vociferously. "I can talk louder than any frog living and that's what our fellow frogs love, By Golly!——Ragged Breeches! RAGGED BREECHES!! RAGGED BREECHES!!!"

"He has great qualifications," said Grandfather Bull Frog. "He understands his fellow-frogs. Mr. Ragged Breeches is elected chairman."

"He didn't get any more votes than I did," shouted Mr. Pop Eye.

"I elected him," said Grandfather Bull Frog. "You can be chairman next time."

"A very close election," remarked Mr. Greenback to Mr. Goggles. "They've elected Mr. Ragged Breeches —G-r-r-e-a-t frog for the place."

"Ragged Breeches! Ragged Breeches! Ragged Breeches!" croaked the fellow frogs.

"The committee will now proceed to business," said Mr. Ragged Breeches, looking most-orful solemn. "We have to consider the very important question of—what's the important question, Mr. Pop Eye?"

"Golly! what was it?" asked Mr. Pop Eye of Mr. Yellow Belly.

"A very important question," Mr. Ragged Breeches went on, speaking louder and louder. "But first we'll adjourn for a swim. The committee will meet when

the sun comes out, and I hope we'll have a quorum. I can beat you across the pond, Yellow Belly."

"That's a great committee," said Mr. Greenback to Mr. Goggles. "They're a fine lot of frogs."

"Now if I was chairman of that committee," began Mr. Goggles, his eyes sticking out of his head, "I'd—"

"O dry up! dry up! dry up!" croaked the fellow frogs.

The sun was shining on the pond bright and hot when the committee scrambled on to the lily pads. Mr. Ragged Breeches puffed himself up and rolled his large round eyes. "Have we a quorum, By Golly?" asked he.

"By Golly, we have!" said Mr. Yellow Belly.

"Then we'll consider this very important question, this very important question. Mr. Pop Eye will open the discussion."

"As a member of this board, I wish to remark"—began Mr. Pop Eye.

"We haven't heard the minutes of the last meeting yet," interrupted Mr. Yellow Belly, greatly excited.

"A serious oversight," said Mr. Ragged Breeches, blinkIng his huge goggle eyes, "a very serious oversight. Let us hear them at once, Mr. Yellow Belly."

"At a meeting of the Society-for-Hearing-Themselves-Talk," began Mr. Yellow Belly, "all the members being present, Mr. Ragged Breeches, Mr. Yellow Belly and Mr. Pop Eye were appointed a committee on Morals."

"Morals! By Golly! By Golly! By Golly!" croaked the fellow frogs.

"At an election held by said committee," continued Mr. Yellow Belly, "our fellow frog Mr. Ragged Breeches was elected chairman. The meeting then adjourned."

"Ragged Breeches! Ragged Breeches! Ragged Breeches!" croaked the fellow frogs.

"Mr. Pop Eye will now address this committee," said Mr. Ragged Breeches.

"As a member of the board," began Mr. Pop Eye, "it is my duty to call your attention to the fact that the water of our great and noble pond is not as muddy as it ought to be, and in my opinion it endangers the health and the morals of this community to drink such clear water. We don't get enough bugs and our blood is getting thin. No bugs, no morals! as everybody knows. And I want to add," continued Mr. Pop Eye, puffing himself up again, "that the young lady frogs are opening their mouths much wider than they did when I was young, and a great deal wider than there is any need of. 'Tain't modest—you can see what's inside of 'em, and it's time something was done about it."

"True! Mr. Pop Eye!" said the chairman. "It's shocking and indecent. I will mention it in the report."

"I've been thinking," began Mr. Yellow Belly, "that something ought to be done for the pollywogs."

"What's the matter with the pollywogs, Mr. Yellow Belly?"

"Something ought to be done," Mr. Yellow Belly went on, "to keep their tails from coming off so soon. You see pollywogs running around without tails and behaving as if they were grown up frogs before they are old enough to have any sense at all."

"That's bad enough," said Mr. Pop Eye, "but the worst thing we have to contend with is the way the young frogs stay out of the water for hours at a time and get dried through. If the parents won't do anything—the Society must take it up."

"It's a turrible condition," said the chairman, "TURRIBLE! I will recommend the Society to investigate it."

"And now I wish to bring to your attention a very grave matter which affects the health of this Community. I speak of the trout microbe. The community can't be healthy as long as it is being devoured by this pest. Thousands of young children die every year from its ravages. Why I lost several hundred of my own children last year alone, and in some families it is even worse. The mortality among the poor is appalling."

"Well, what are we going to do about it?" asked Mr. Yellow Belly.

"Do!" exclaimed the chairman. "We must pass resolutions of course. That's the only thing to do at

a critical time like this. The committee must do its duty."

"Of course!" said Mr. Pop Eye, "that's the only thing to do at a time like this."

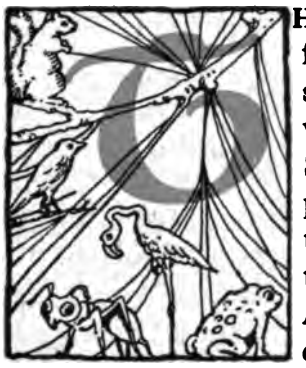
So the committee looked most-orful solemn and rolled its eyes and passed resolutions.

"They are passing resolutions," croaked all the members of the Society-for-Hearing-Themselves-Talk, looking most-orful solemn.

"The committee has acted just in time," said Grandfather Bull Frog, "just in time. Our fellow frog, Mr. Ragged Breeches has done his duty."

"Just in time! By Golly! By Golly! By Golly!" croaked the fellow frogs.

THE CAWCUS



THE time had come, Miss Crow said, for the lady-crows to assert themselves. They must lift up their voices; they must hold a cawcus. She said it was foolish to suppose that they could do the way their mothers had done, much less their grandmothers. THEY hadn't ASSERTED themselves. But then of course, they didn't know any better, poor things. THEY just sat on eggs and fed their children and did fool things of that sort. Now the lady-crows were going to assert themselves, and they wouldn't have to sit on eggs or do fool things any more and could devote their whole time to ASSERTING themselves.

All the lady-crows that heard Miss Crow talk agreed that these were glorious ideas. They said they would like to stop doing fool things and show the world that they could ASSERT themselves. And they said, "What a strong face Miss Crow has. And hasn't she a sweet caw? And doesn't she ASSERT herself?"

Miss Crow said she would be perfectly-happy if she could help them to ASSERT themselves. She said they must all work for the CAWSE, and they all agreed that that was what they wanted to do and they would be perfectly-happy if they could only work for the CAWSE.

Miss Crow preened her feathers and cawed and announced that they would hold a cawcus in the pine

woods that afternoon and all the lady-crows and their lady-cousins must come and caw.

Every lady-crow told her lady-cousin and every lady-cousin told a friend-of-hers and they came from Far-and-near and from Here-and-there and also from Round-about and Over-yonder, until the air was black with lady-crows and their lady-cousins and friends-of-theirs. They came in dozens and hundreds and thousands and filled the trees, till there wasn't room for anybody else except the White Cricket that lived and chirped in a wild grape vine; and the White Cricket minded its own business and always staid on the under side of the grape leaf.

The White Cricket was very musical and chirped all through the night as if it were playing on a little fiddle with only one string, and in the daytime it slept, though it would sometimes wake up for a while and chirp between naps.

When the lady-crows and their lady-cousins and friends-of-theirs arrived, the White Cricket had just waked up and was beginning its evening song. It was a very sweet little song, soft and low, but always on the same note. The lady-crows began to caw all together without waiting for Miss Crow to open the meeting, and the louder Miss Crow cawed the louder they all cawed. Lady-cousins who were still on the way, as soon as they heard the sound of voices began to caw too, so that they were out of breath when they arrived; but as soon as they could fill themselves up

with air again they went right on cawing, which pleased them.

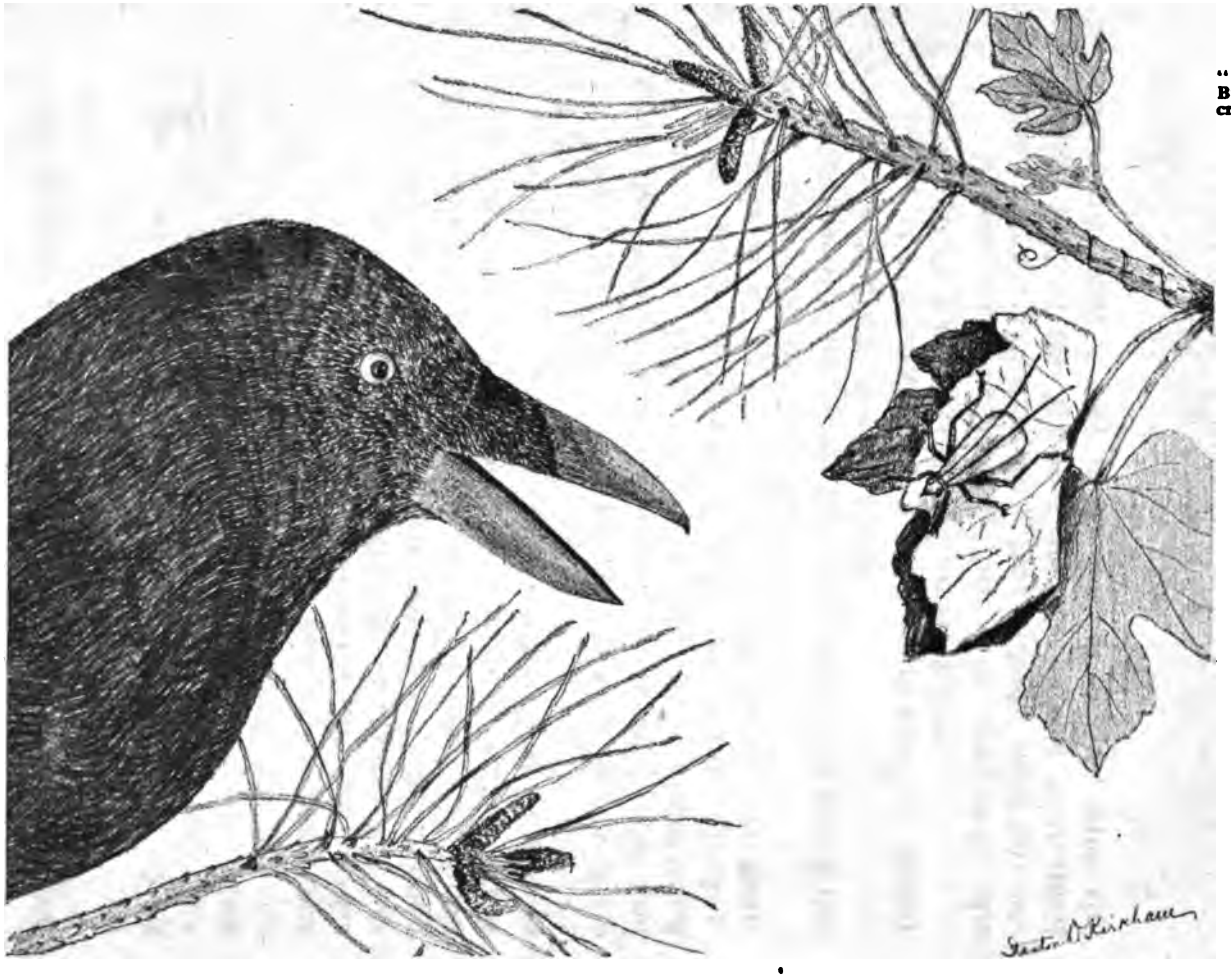
Miss Crow tried to call the meeting to order and cawed and cawed until she nearly cawed her head off because, you see, every lady-crow cawed so loud that she could hear only herself, and every time any other lady-crow seemed to be getting a little louder she would open her mouth and caw so fast and so hard that her eyes would bulge out. This made the lady-crows and their lady-cousins and friends-of-theirs very excited, so that they hopped up and down and flopped their wings in each other's shiny black faces and shook some feathers out of their shiny black tails. Their eyes snapped and their tongues wagged and they were all perfectly-happy.

The White Cricket went on playing on its little fiddle, but the noise of the lady-crows grew louder and louder and it could not hear itself at all. "There must be something the matter," said the White Cricket. "Something quite serious, I should think. O dear, what can the trouble be?"

"Please ma'am, what has happened?" it asked the nearest lady-crow, very politely.

But the nearest lady-crow was cawing so loudly she wouldn't have heard a thunder storm.

"Please ma'am, is anything the matter?" the White Cricket asked again. But nobody paid any attention and as the White Cricket couldn't hear itself even, and being a very philosophical cricket with the



" 'Stop that noise, Bug!' said the lady-crow crossly."



habit of minding its own business, it went to playing on its little fiddle, till it grew tired of playing a tune it could not hear and fell asleep.

When the White Cricket opened its eyes again it was quite dark and still. All the lady-crows except one had moved away to another part of the woods. The White Cricket began at once to play on its little fiddle.

"Stop that noise, Bug!" said the lady-crow crossly.

"Please ma'am, I want to play on my fiddle," the White Cricket answered, most politely.

"Why don't you play in the daytime, then—and not keep respectable folks awake?"

"Please ma'am, I couldn't, you made so much noise."

"Nonsense," said the lady-crow, "we were holding a cawcus. It was very important."

"What were they saying?" asked the White Cricket, very politely again.

"I don't know what they were saying and I don't care. I know what I was saying and I meant it, too."

"You seemed to be very excited," ventured the White Cricket.

"I was ASSERTING myself," replied the lady-crow. "I was working for the CAWSE."

"Please ma'am, what does that mean?"

"What does that mean? Why, you poor ignorant bug. It means the CAWSE, to be sure. We must ASSERT ourselves."

"Do you mean," asked the White Cricket softly, "that you must caw so loud that you can't hear anybody else caw?"

"We can't expect a mere bug to understand such things," said the lady-crow in an injured tone. "What's the use of talking to a bug anyway?" and she flew off to join the other lady-crows.

"She seems very much excited," said the White Cricket to itself. "I wonder what fun she finds in that." And it fell to playing softly on its little fiddle.



THE LITTLE SHINER



EVER since anybody can remember there has been a school of fish in the pond,—perch and pickerel and shiners. The pickerel and perch grow up and leave school after awhile, but the shiners never do. They always go to school. Well, they LIKE it. If a little shiner couldn't go to school he would be very unhappy.

You see, a shiner did run away from school once upon a time and things happened to him and when he came back, all the little fish said: "I told you so!" He just took a notion and notions are bad for shiners, stremely bad. Nearly all of them know this and so they never dream of leaving school, but now and then one thinks he knows better.

This particularly gregious Shiner said to himself that he was tired of school and was going to swim alone and go where he pleased, and this was a fool notion that only a gregious shiner could get. He never knew how he took it. He couldn't have caught it from the other shiners, because none of them had it. But he took it, and then he slipped away by himself and set out to see the world.

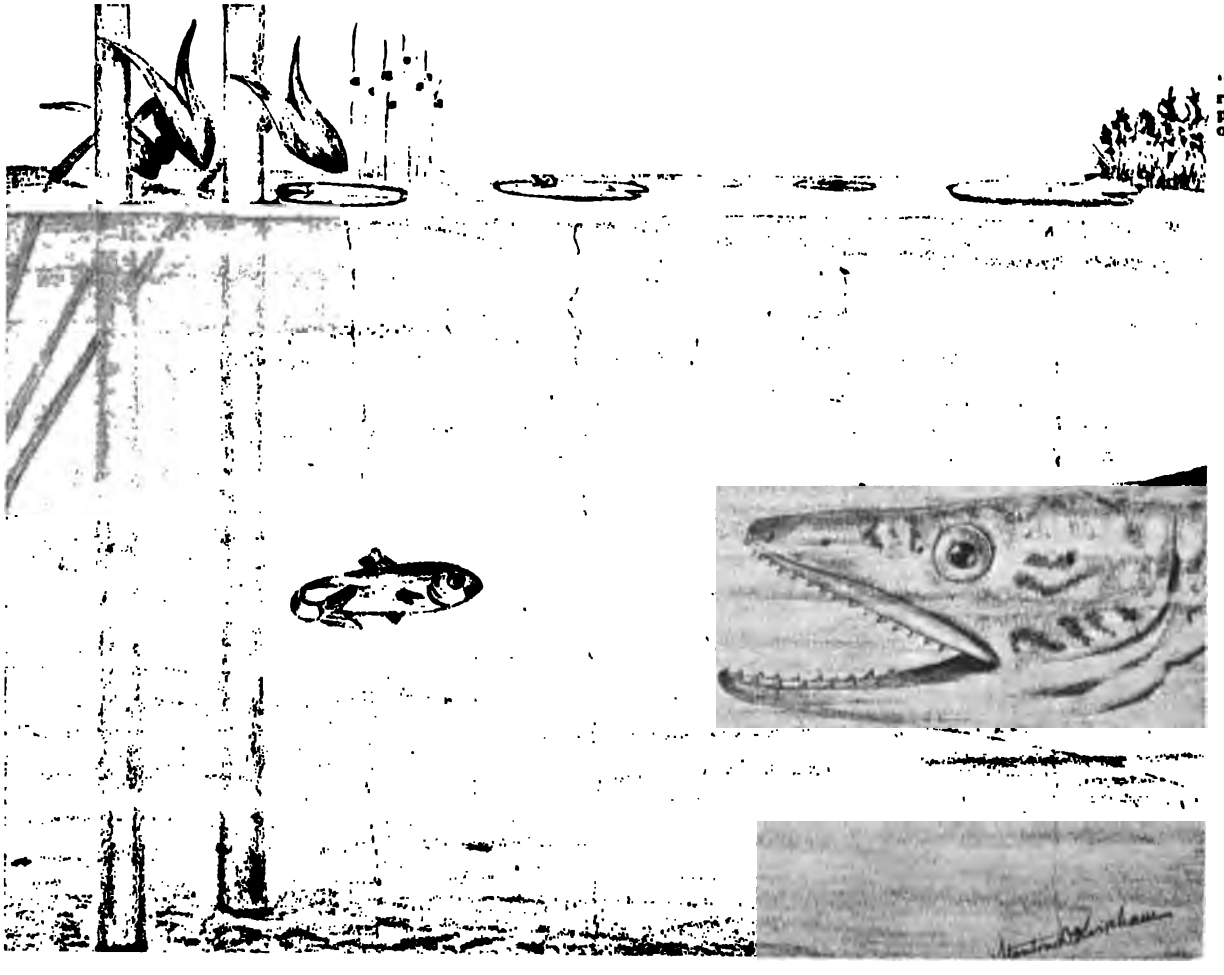
He had been around the pond a hundred and one times with the school, where each shiner had his place and all swam with the same speed and never changed. But this was different. It looked new to him now

and he wiggledy-woggled his tail and cavorted like mad. He began to think he was the only shiner in the pond and that he was about the biggest fish that ever grew. The more he thought of himself the bigger he felt, and he grew and grew and grew, till he was sure he was a whale; but somehow his skin didn't get too tight for him even then.

After a while he came to a part of the pond he had never been in before, an awesome place where there was much pickerel weed and eel grass and the water was of the beautiful color of bean soup. He could not see far and he began to feel less and less like a whale. A dim shadowy shape wobbled past in the grouzly gloom and he slipped behind a slimy boulder and hid. It was Miss Mud Turtle, she that was, but she did not see the little Shiner for her head was out of water and she was looking for frogs. He could feel himself shrinking now and it wasn't a comfy feeling at all. When another dim shape loomed in the distance he suddenly realized that he was precisely the size of a minute.

This second shape had a large hole in and it was coming hole first. Before the particularly gregious Shiner knew what had happened, the hole shut up and he found himself flopping in tee-total darkness. To be perfectly frank, he was in the dark inside of Mr. Pike.

Mr. Pike, having swallowed the Shiner, likewise swallowed the next thing that came along, which happened to be a hook, and found himself flopping on the bottom of a boat. While he flopped outside the



"He suddenly realized that he was precisely the size of a minute."



little Shiner flopped inside, and then HE was outside too, for he wriggled out of Mr. Pike's mouth, over the rail and into the water and slipped away in the grouzly gloom.

That particularly gregious Shiner never stopped swimming and the further he went the more glummish it grew, for the water was thick and soupy and the lily pads shut out the light. This was where the little pickerel frogs lived and young Mr. Watersnake and Old Man Muskrat.

Very melancholy grew that little fish in that sad place. He thought of the school swimming along shore, all the fins and tails moving together. But he could not cry. No matter how unhappy a shiner may feel, he cannot cry for he has no tear duct. A tear duct would be a very handy thing for a shiner that wanted to weep, or to wail or do anything like that. He couldn't holler for he had nothing to holler with—so he just sulked. He poked his nose under a stick and sulked and sulked. That's the only thing a shiner CAN do when he's melancholy. All shiners learn how to sulk when they are quite young. By the time they are two months old they can do it very well.

When a brown water beetle of a terrifying bigness came walloping along, the Shiner paid no attention to him, but that carniverous bug bit a piece out of his back before he could shake him off. He took one mouthful and left a neat round hole. The little Shiner was not much hurt, but he was so scared that his gills actually turned pale.

He did not feel at all like a whale now, and he began to think he was really too small for his skin. A shiner that has run away from school would never think of going back with a piece bitten out of him and that Shiner knew it would grow in again if he sulked and took plenty of nourishing food. By reason of the paleness of the gills he was afraid to stay where he was, so he slunk away in the dark, skulking behind stones and under lily pads. Each day he grew thinner and his eyes grew bigger as he skulked and sulked, waiting for the piece to grow in, that the walloping beetle had bitten out of his back.

At last he felt in his bones that the hole had filled up, and when a Shiner feels anything in his bones he is sure of it for he feels it all over. He wanted to leave that water of the beautiful color of bean soup, and not knowing which way to go, he followed his nose and it was all his tail could do to keep up with it. This was really the only way to get out of a glummish place like that; for his nose actually did go out into clear water, and to be perfectly frank, his tail arrived very soon after.

When it reached clear water the nose of that particularly gregious Shiner kept on till it took him back to the school, where he fell into line with the rest and tried to make believe he had never run away. But all the little shiners saw the scar where the walloping beetle had bitten a piece out of his back and said:

"I told you so!"

THE FIRST WOODPECKER AND THE NEXT



TIME, you will remember, began on a Monday at one o'clock, and it was only an age or two after that, that the First Woodpecker moved into the woods. Woodpeckers have bills like chisels and tongues like harpoons, feet like climbers and tails that they can sit down on. But when they moved into the woods they were poor and did not have these things and it took them just an age to get them. Of course they had bills and tongues and feet and tails in the meantime, but they were of a very old-fashioned make and they couldn't sit down on their tails, or climb with their feet nor harpoon with their tongues, and they hadn't learned to drum.

The First Woodpecker was hungry one day with a primeval appetite, which was the only kind they had in those early times, and was hunting in a tree for something to eat. While he was looking about and holding on the best he could in his old-fashioned way, he came to a stub of a dead branch and tapped it with his Early-Quaternary bill, and as he tapped the stub it made a noise which sounded loud and clear in the Primeval Woods. When he heard this he struck the branch again and again and after each blow he stopped to listen and was DElighted with the noise he made, for it was the first he had ever heard.

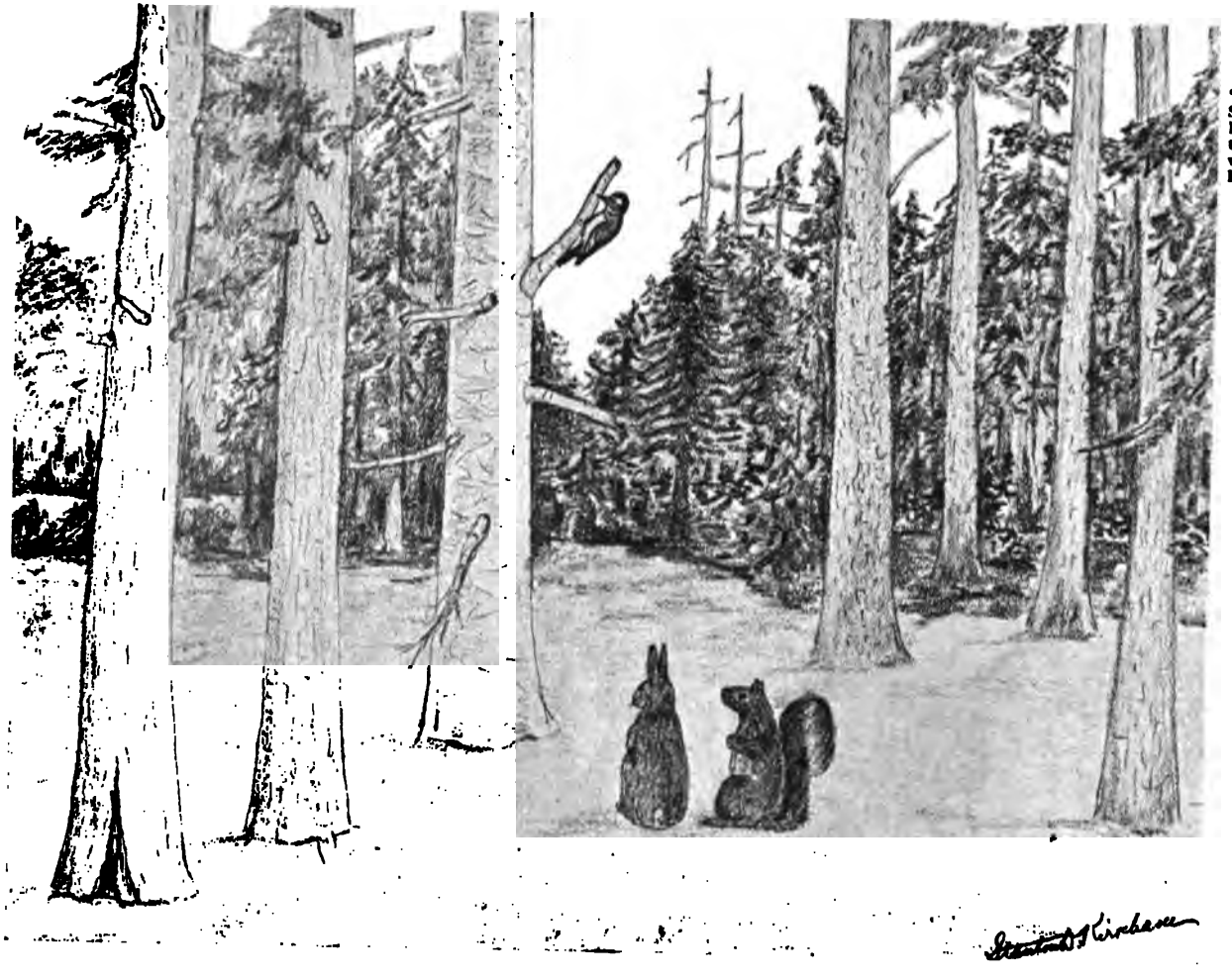
From that time he went every day to tap on the dead stub and practised faithfully until he had learned to drum. The First Squirrel and the First Rabbit came to hear him and were stonished at his performance. "What a beautiful noise!" cried they, and the First Woodpecker himself believed this to be the case and was tickled to death.

Now it happened about this time that the Next Woodpecker arrived in the Primeval Woods, also with a primeval appetite, and hearing the beautiful noise that the First Woodpecker was making he paused to listen, for it was the first HE had ever heard. When he discovered that there was another Woodpecker in the woods and that he was the author of this pleasing sound, he approached and besought him most humbly that he might give him lessons.

"Go to!" said the First Woodpecker. "I am the author and discoverer of beautiful noise. No one shall make it but me. If anyone else tries it, it shows that he is a dangerous pteradactyl and a cheap skate and any noise that he makes will only be a contemptible imitation."

And this was the beginning of human nature and the very first sign of it.

The Next Woodpecker was filled with righteous indignation. "He thinks he knows it all," said he. "I'll show him that he isn't the only one that can make a noise." And this was the very next sign of human nature.



"The First Squirrel and the First Rabbit came to hear him and were stonished at his performance."



So he watched the First Woodpecker as he was drumming one day and, seeing how it was done, he found a hickory stub in the Primeval Woods and went and practised by himself. Presently he also was drumming and the First Rabbit and the First Squirrel came to listen and were stonished. The Next Woodpecker played every day upon his stub and soon became convinced that HE was the author and discoverer of beautiful noise.

When the First Woodpecker heard of this his primeval feelings got the better of him and gave him a pain in his tum, which was the first pain he had ever felt; and he said, referring to the Next Woodpecker, that it only proved what he had always believed, that the Next Woodpecker was not only a dangerous pteradactyl but a cheap skate, as anybody could see who had eyes in his head. Now this was the most decidedly human trait that had yet appeared in the Primeval Woods.

In spite of the pain in his tum, the First Woodpecker drummed louder than ever on his stub. "This," said he, to the first Rabbit and the First Squirrel, "is the only beautiful noise, of which I am the author and discoverer. It is absurd even to suppose that anyone else could have discovered it."

The Next Woodpecker also drummed on his stub and being younger, and having absolutely no pain in his tum, made even more noise than did the First. "That old Jay," said he to the First Rabbit, and the

First Squirrel, "is not making a really-truly noise at all —he only thinks he is. I am the author and discoverer and there is no other." And the First Rabbit and the First Squirrel said—truly it must be even so.

Now there came into the Primeval Woods a lady-woodpecker and nobody knew where she came from; neither did she herself know.

When the First Woodpecker saw the lady, he forgot the original pain and began to drum with a great flourish. The lady pretended she did not hear—while she listened and was filled with admiration. And in this she was almost human.

The First Woodpecker played away on his stub and while he drummed, it seemed to him that he was talking to the lady woodpecker.

"TAP! TAP!—Look at me!"

"TAP! TAP!—TAP! TAP!—Hear me drum!"

"TAP! TAP!—TAP! TAP! TAP! Don't you think I am a wonderful bird?"

"TAP! TAP! TAP!—r-r-r-r-r-r-r-!!! What a lovely bill you have. O come and live with me in the Primeval Woods."

While the First Woodpecker was drumming, the Next approached and seeing the lady-woodpecker he also was possessed to drum; so he flew away to his stub to show what a noise he could make and to tell the lady-woodpecker what a very superior bird he was.

"He's only a cheap skate," said the First Wood-

pecker. "I'm the author and discoverer of beautiful noise. Come live with me."

"Don't listen to that old Jay," said the next Woodpecker from his stub. "He has no ear for noise. Just listen to mine. Lovely bird, O live with me!"

Now the lady-woodpecker was much perturbed. She had but lately arrived upon the earth and this was the first noise she had heard and these the first woodpeckers she had ever seen. She thought it would be very agreeable to go and live in the Primeval Woods with one of these fine birds and have him always making that really beautiful noise—but which one?

When she listened to the First Woodpecker she thought he made the most beautiful noise, and when she heard the Next she was sure that HE did, and she would never have been able to decide which she liked best if the First Woodpecker hadn't had such a pain in his tum.

That pain was more-than-he-could-bear and made him so cross that he flew at the next Woodpecker and tried to nihilate him, and he would have done it—he had such an orful pain—if the next Woodpecker hadn't nihilated him first.

When the Next Woodpecker had nihilated the First he flew to his stub and drummed ever so hard. "That proves," said he to the First Rabbit and the First Squirrel, "that I am the author and discoverer of beautiful noise."

And the First Rabbit and the First Squirrel said it

must be even so. The lady-woodpecker also said that it proved it without a doubt and she would go and live with the Next Woodpecker in the Primeval Woods —which she did.

They lived ten years before they were eaten by the First Cat, and had fifty children, two hundred grand-children and one thousand two hundred and five great grand-children—all woodpeckers. The fifty children, two hundred grand-children and one thousand two hundred and five great grand-children learned to drum like the Next Woodpecker, and all believed he was the author and discoverer of beautiful noise. And he was the only one in the Primeval Woods who knew that he was a really-truly humbug.

THE WAY OF THE WORLD



THE hills were blue and smoky; crickets were singing in the cornfield, and red and yellow leaves were sailing on the pond. Miss Spider decided the time had come to make herself a balloon and fly across the field. So she climbed a cornstalk, stood on her head and began to spin till a long thread floated in the air.

While she was spinning her thread, Miss Black Ant, prowling up the cornstalk, peered over the edge of a leaf and beheld her all alone and standing on her head.

"What on earth are you doing, Miss Spider?" cried she.

"I'm going to fly, Miss Ant. That's what I'm doing."

When she heard that, Miss Ant came near falling, she was SO amused, but Miss Spider went on with her thread.

"How do you think you're going to fly, Miss Spider?"

"Leave me be," said Miss Spider.

With that Miss Ant had to run and find Mr. Grasshopper.

"O Mr. Grasshopper, come here. Miss Spider's daffy and thinks she's going to fly."

Mr. Grasshopper was hopping near by and when he heard this he called out—"What did you say, Miss Ant? What's the matter with Miss Spider?"

"Come and see," said Miss Ant.

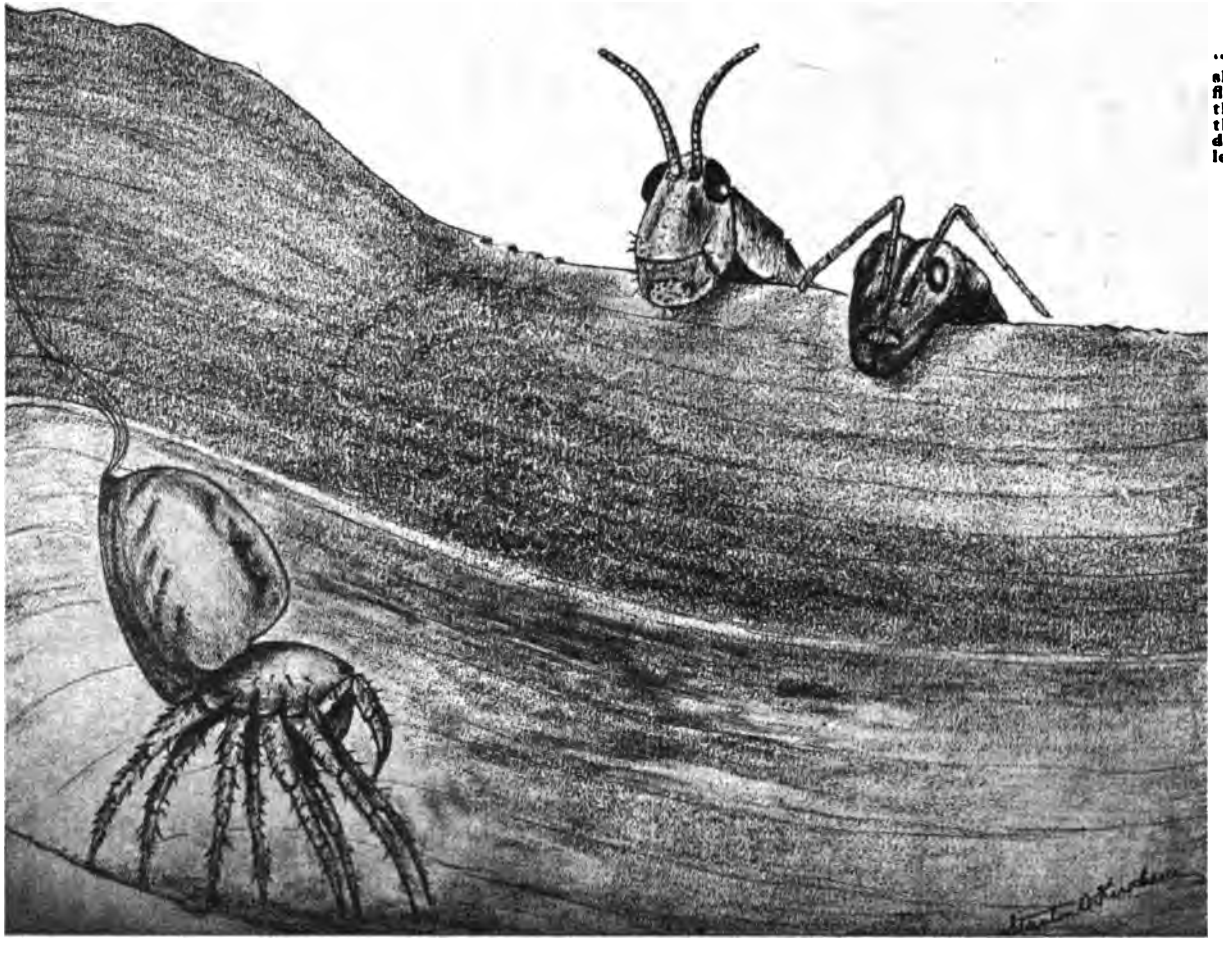
So they scrambled up the cornstalk and there was Miss Spider still standing on her head.

"Here I go," said she, "I'm going to fly!" and just then the breeze caught the long thread, dragging her off the leaf, but it broke in two and floated away and Miss Spider dropped to the ground—KER FLUMP!

While Miss Ant and Mr. Grasshopper were laughing, up came Miss Spider and standing on her head began spinning out another thread, and Miss Ant winked a number of her compound eyes at Mr. Grasshopper. The thread grew longer and longer and floated above the cornstalk and Miss Spider stood on the tip toes of her front feet.

Suddenly she gave a jump and sailed up into the air and in the next instant spun herself a sort of balloon basket which she grasped with her feet, and she really-truly and actually did fly over the cornfield. Miss Ant watched Miss Spider with all of her compound eyes until she was out of sight, which was in no time at all, as she is very near sighted, and then she and Mr. Grasshopper started across the field to see what would happen.

Miss Spider flew in her balloon as high as you can throw a stone, and the air had become rarified—O stremely so. When she had broken all records she began to descend. This was done by pulling in her line with her feet and rolling it up in a ball in her mouth, whereupon she slowly came to earth and alighted gently



" 'Here I go,' said she, 'I'm going to fly!' and just then the breeze caught the long thread, dragging her off the leaf."



on the shore of the pond. Now it happened that a birch leaf came sailing by at that moment, all yellow and crinkly and pleasing to the eye, and Miss Spider climbed nimbly aboard as Miss Ant and Mr. Grasshopper arrived, covered with dust and panting for breath. And even as they watched, she stood upon her head and spun a thread.

"O Miss Spider, wait a minute!" called Miss Ant.

But she only smiled a spinster smile as she scudded away for the other shore and said—precisely nothing.

Miss Black Ant was puzzled by this strange conduct of Miss Spider, but it would never have done to let Mr. Grasshopper see this, so she merely said in an offhand way—stremely offhand: "Well, I must go and look after my cows."

"What's that, Miss Ant?"

"Nothing! I just said I was going to look after my cows," and away she went, waving her jointed feelers.

When Mr. Grasshopper heard that, he laughed a grasshopper laugh as he skipped by her side. Miss Ant ran along the edge of the pond and turned up the hill to a small maple tree, up which she went to the lowest branch, where she stopped and looked down at Mr. Grasshopper who stood on his hindmost legs, staring up into the tree.

"You don't keep your cows up there, do you?" Mr. Grasshopper asked.

"That's just what I do," replied Miss Ant, whereupon she ran along the branch to a fork and disappeared.

Mr. Grasshopper could not follow, so he laughed his grasshopper laugh and soon forgot all about it. For grasshoppers, you know, have very good forgetters in the backs of their heads. O yes, my child, and they can disremember anything they please. They have ears in their legs and little files on their wings, and they play on these files with sweet winning smiles: also they lay up nothing for the winter—and neither does the horse. Now that is all there is to know about grasshoppers, except that they are vegetarians and fond of salad—stremely so.

Miss Ant ran along the branch till she came to a twig and out the twig to a leaf and THERE was a herd of green ant cows grazing together in the shade.

An ant cow is not exactly like a red-and-white cow. To begin with, it is about the size of the head of a pin; it has no horns, but it sometimes has wings—and it lays eggs, which no red-and-white cow ever does. And herein you see it is unlike even the purple cow.

Miss Ant was greatly pleased to find her cows contentedly browsing in their pasture and showed her pleasure by stroking them with her feelers. They were fine animals, as you might readily see—fat and sleek and of that delicate green color of well-bred stock. It was milking time and Miss Ant proceeded at once to milk them. The milk also is somewhat different from that of the red-and-white cow and looks more like honey, or syrup, or melted sugar and such delectable things. Miss Ant had only to tickle the cow with her

feelers and then take the milk. She had no pail so she drank the milk on the spot which saved her all further trouble.

While she was tending her cows a small brown ant came and looked at them as if he—or she or it—would like to have some milk, but Miss Black Ant stared with all of her compound, chromatic, self-adjusting eyes and waved her jointed feelers, which so frightened the little brown ant that she-or-he-or-it dropped off the edge of the leaf and fell through space inch after inch to the earth.

Then a gnat with gauzy wings and a bottle-green coat lit on the cow pasture and this gnat was precisely the size of a green cow. Darting at him, Miss Ant gnashed her horny jaws together and the gnat thought of his home and children and took to his gauzy wings.

The ant-cows continued to browse with their little green beaks and if you had watched them with compound, chromatic, self-adjusting eyes you would have seen that they were slowly swelling like toy balloons. When she saw one that looked as if it were going to burst, Miss Ant tickled it with her jointed feelers and put the milk in her patent pail.

She was about to take the milk of a particularly fat green cow—and heaven knows where she was going to put it, for her pail was full—when suddenly Mr. Chickadee dashed in to the maple leaf and sent it whirling to the ground, ant, cows and all. Before Miss Ant knew what had happened the leaf dropped to the grass.

Mr. Grasshopper was hopping about under the tree, for he often practised that way to help pass the time. He was trying a new kind of hop which was to go straight ahead and then turn in the air and land backwards. As he was accomplishing this fearsome trick, the leaf sailed past his goggle eyes and settled to the ground. When he saw who was standing on it he opened his eyes very wide and when Miss Ant began to run about waving her jointed feelers, touching first one green bug and then another, Mr. Grasshopper concluded that she had gone daffy sure enough. But then his behind legs began to kick again and in another minute they had hopped off with him and he had disremembered all about it—by reason of the forgettor in the back of his head.

On reaching the other shore of the pond Miss Spider climbed the bank and decided she would build the biggest web ever and catch a true-blue bottle fly. So she spied around until she saw a blueberry bush and a clump of golden rod side by side. This was precisely what she wanted and, stretching a line from one to the other, she ran merrily to and fro paying out threads from her little insides, criss-cross, till she had a frame for her web, like the spokes of a wheel. Miss Spider was a merry soul in a dry spiderish way—though she never laughed, she never even sneezed, and the more she thought of the true-blue bottle fly the merrier she grew.

Round and round she ran on the spokes of her

wheel, reeling out a line from those little insides and hitching it as she went with her off hind foot, till she had built a fish net in the sky. And she sprinkled it over with glue in gobs and globules and drops, so small that they could only be seen by taking two looks and a half.

When the web was done and besprinkled with glue this crafty Miss Spider just smiled, being a merry soul in a spiderish way and loving her work, you know. In the centre she arranged herself all comfy and that is to say, upside down. Then she stood on her head with a line in each foot and continued her spinster smile.

Now Mr. Blue Bottle Fly was gadding about to see what he could see. The sunbeams danced on his bottle-blue back and he buzzed to hear himself buzz. When he came to the web, all besprinkled with glue in gobs and globules and drops, he said—"What fool thing is that," buzzed headlong into the net, and found himself glued to the spot.

Then came the little spider, smiling inwardly with pleasing thoughts of dinner, and she tied his legs neatly with yards of thread which she spun from her little insides.

While she was tying up the legs of the true-blue bottle fly, six in all, Mrs. Muddauber came sailing by, her long yellow legs dangling in the air and her mouth full of mud. Mrs. Muddauber had decided to lay an egg and was building a nest to put it in. Her ways are

extremely erratic—quite unlike the hens—and she is a very fierce person—O hijjus fierce.

"What a fat, juicy spider to lay my precious egg in," she said to herself as she hurried along. And whizzing to her nest she slapped on the mud and was back in an instant. Pouncing upon Miss Spider she stung her in her thoracic ganglia, which is about where her waist ought to be. "How my back hurts me," murmured Miss Spider, drowsily—and then she fell asleep. Carrying the unconscious Miss Spider to her nest, Mrs. Muddauber shoved her in head-first with the egg she had laid. Then she walled up the door with mud and left her hermetically sealed, and that means canned.

And from that egg was hatched a little worm, which worm did eat Miss Spider, and being eaten, there is an end to my tale.

THE COMPLETE STONISHMENT OF MR. GRASSHOPPER



OW listen, child, and I will tell you a tale that is nearly half true and entirely wonderful, and it begins like this:

Mr. Grasshopper was once dancing by himself, when Miss Black Ant appeared and watched him with her compound self-adjusting eyes.

"What are you trying to do?" asked she.

"I'm learning a new dance," said Mr. Grasshopper.

"Looks like a fool dance. Is it any fun?"

"It's more than fun," Mr. Grasshopper replied. "Try it!"

"I couldn't," said Miss Black Ant. "I haven't any brains in my feet."

"Why, where are they?"

"In my head."

"I never heard of such a thing," said Mr. Grasshopper. "Then of course you never could learn the hop flop. Ho! Ho! Brains in her head!" and Mr. Grasshopper continued the hop flop, while Miss Black Ant went off to tend to her cows—not having any brains in her feet.

Presently came a Measuring Worm that way and the length of him over all was five centimeters. This

measuring worm progressed in a manner peculiar to himself, as ordained in the beginning, for he brought his tail-end up to his head-end and hunched up his back in a loop, and wherever he went he measured the ground, and whenever he climbed a grass stalk he measured that. All day long he measured off centimeters and every time he measured his own length he said,—"One more—by Clam!" And he was possessed with a desire to measure all things.

When he was hungry, this very precise Worm first marked off five centimeters of a grass leaf and then ate it. And he grew and he grew, till his length over all was six centimeters. After that he always measured off six centimeters at a time and said,—"One more—by Clam!"

This exceedingly precise Worm, you see, could only count as far as one.

When he saw Mr. Grasshopper he paused, for he was a worm of sedate character.

"Hum! Why do you thus hop?" he asked.

"I'm made that way," Mr. Grasshopper replied.

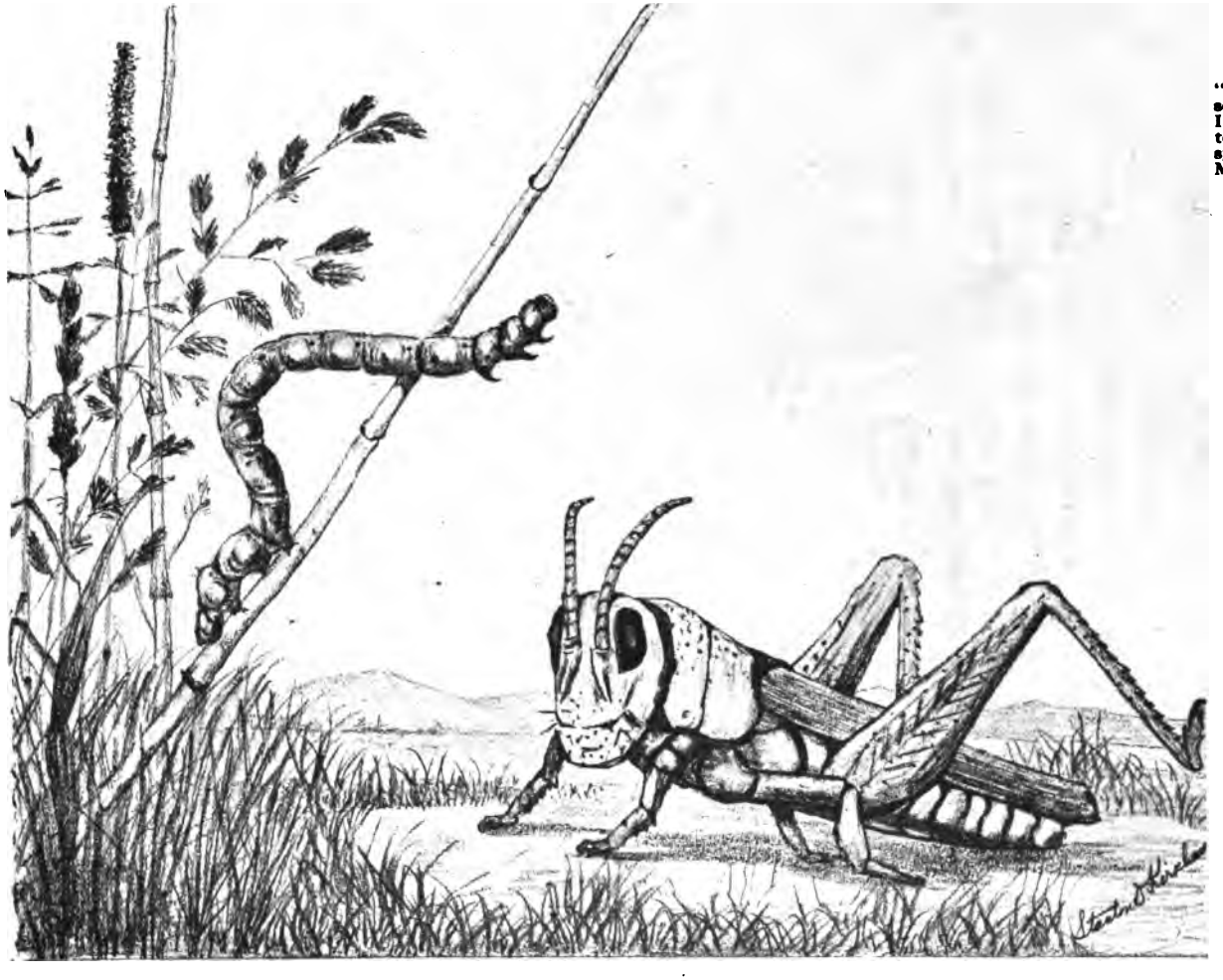
"Straordinary, I call it!"

"I call it the hop flop," said Mr. Grasshopper.

"Hum! and you like it?"

"Watch me!" and Mr. Grasshopper cavorted mightily, having brains in his feet.

"I don't see any sense in that, but I suppose you have to get it out of your system," said the Measuring Worm, after watching him awhile, and he brought his



" 'I don't see any sense in that, but I suppose you have to get it out of your system,' said the Measuring Worm."



hind-end up to his front-end, hunched up his back in a loop and went to sleep.

And now begins the entirely wonderful part of this tale.

Mr. Grasshopper hop-flopped for an hour or so and then went off to play with a friend-of-his. When he came back next morning to practise the hop flop, that very precise Worm was in the exact spot where he had left him, moving his head to and fro as if dancing a jig.

"What kind of a dance is that?" asked Mr. Grasshopper, but the Measuring Worm kept on moving his head and merely said "Hum!"

"You aren't trying to learn the hop flop, are you?" asked Mr. Grasshopper.

"Hum!" said the Measuring Worm, and that's all he said, just—"Hum!" But his head went to and fro, to and fro.

Mr. Grasshopper stood and watched him, till it made his feet go to see the Measuring Worm moving his head, and very soon he was dancing the hop flop and cavorting mightily. But the Measuring Worm continued to shake his head from side to side, while he spun from his mouth a fine thread of silk round about him—as it was ordained in the beginning—and every time he wove a thread he said,—"One more—by Clam!" He spun and he spun while Mr. Grasshopper danced, until at length—such are the facts—he had completely spun himself out of sight and had curled up in the small silk bag which he had made.

Mr. Grasshopper hopped and flopped, for the sun was warm and he was a nimble lad. Then he wiped the perspiration from his mottled nose with his behind foot and turned to look at the Measuring Worm. But there was no worm to be seen—only a fuzzy silk bag.

Mr. Grasshopper was completely stonished. He rubbed his behind foot over his large round eye and peered at the bag and his stonishment waxed greater. But he has a wonderful forgettor and very soon he went to dancing again and thought no more of it. And the period of his forgetfulness lasted ten days, during which time he also forgot many other things and continued to practise the hop flop.

Nor would he ever have thought of that precise Measuring Worm again, had it not been for the wonderful event I am about to relate, and which so completely stonished him that he continued in that state during the rest of his life, which was nine weeks and three days, for he lived to a great age.

Now it happened that at the end of ten days Mr. Grasshopper was again practising the hop flop on that very spot where he had so often hop-flopped when he was younger, but having attained to middle age and having waxed fat, he no longer cavorted mightily but rested now and then. While he was resting, he caught sight of the fuzzy silk bag into which the Measuring Worm had disappeared and, through a hole in the top, a head was suddenly thrust out.

"Who are you?" cried Mr. Grasshopper, who was so stonished that his behind feet kicked.

The head disappeared into the bag without answering and Mr. Grasshopper's behind feet nearly hopped away with him. Presently the head was poked out of the hole again and the bulging eyes stared at him for a long time.

"Well! can't you say anything?" asked Mr. Grasshopper, kicking away.

"I don't know who I am yet," said the head.

"Don't know YET! When will you know?"

"Tomorrow morning at precisely ten o'clock," replied the head and disappeared again into the bag.

Mr. Grasshopper was so completely stonished at this that his behind feet did really hop away with him and carried him to the blueberry pasture.

Next morning he was back again in front of the silk bag with the hole in it. He could not tell when it was ten o'clock, so he came at five and waited.

He waited till six and then his behind feet began to kick.

He waited till seven and then he said he knew it must be long after ten.

He waited till eight and by that time he had forgotten what he came for—by reason of his wonderful forgettor, you know. But his stonishment remained and he waited till nine, wondering what it was that had stonished him so.

Suddenly the head appeared at the hole in the silk

bag and began to come out, followed by a body with some legs, and on each side of the body was a little shrivelled leaf.

"It's precisely ten o'clock," said the head, looking at Mr. Grasshopper. "Am I much changed?"

"Changed! How do I know?" cried Mr. Grasshopper. "Who are you, anyway?"

"I feel so changed I hardly know, myself," said the head, rubbing its front hands on its face. "I'm a moth now."

"NOW!" cried Mr. Grasshopper, trying to keep his behind feet still. "What were you before?"

"A Measuring Worm, of course. But really you mustn't ask me so many questions. I'm so faint."

Mr. Grasshopper was too stonished to say anything, and while he stood staring at the Moth the little shrivelled leaves began to grow larger and larger before his very eyes and to change their color until they had turned into really-truly wings—brown with a white line across each one.

"There! that's done," said the Moth. "How do they look?"

"How did you do that?" asked Mr. Grasshopper, whose eyes stuck out of his head now with stonishment—simply with stonishment.

"It just did itself. Don't you ever change?"

"Change my skin every Saturday night, of course," said Mr. Grasshopper, "but I never change into anything else."

"How dull!" exclaimed the Moth. "Measuring Worms always do," and, after slowly flapping its new wings, it suddenly flew away into the shade of the woods, while Mr. Grasshopper stared after it. And his stonishment lasted to the end of his life, though he lived to a great age.

KIDNAPPED



MISS BLACK ANT had left her cows and was on the way back to the nest. Her New England conscience obliged her to go to the bottom of every hole and run up and down all the grass stalks in her way—and there were many. Before she had gone far she knew that something unusual had happened. She didn't feel it in her bones, being boneless; but she SMELLED red-ants—even so—and she began to run. This was on the third of August.

When she reached the nest the smell was so strong it made her ill. Standing upon her hind legs she saw an army of red ants pouring into the main gate. Some blacks were fighting desperately with the reds; others were running frantically to and fro and signalling wildly. Miss Black Ant was deafened by the sound of their feet and suffocated by the dust and by the evil smell.

Soon hundreds of blacks and reds were fighting and the ground became littered with legs and feelers. The ants always caught each other by the legs and when one leg was sawed off they took another. Some were limping about on four legs; some hobbled on three. Red ants with all their legs rushed past carrying black heads on the ends of their feelers. Miss Black Ant grabbed one of these ants by the hind leg and began to chew. That head belonged to a very dear friend and

Miss Black Ant chewed every leg but one off the red ant. Before she could remove that, three red ants caught her by three legs and pulled. They all pulled in different directions and nearly tore her to pieces. When they stopped to rest she was so stretched that the small of her back was where her neck ought to have been, and before she could pull herself together a very large and very plain female red ant closed her jaws around the middle of her and carried her off as if she were a child. Miss Black Ant tried to wriggle herself loose, but the red ant's jaws pinched so hard that she was doubled up in a ball.

The very plain female with the strong jaws joined the line of marching reds that were coming out of the nest carrying eggs and black children. Every egg and every child in the nest was carried away and the long column of ants marched through the woods to the red ant-hill, which was as big as a bushel basket with a simply-superb view from the top. Up the hill they went carrying all the blacks except those that had died for their country, and they brought only THEIR heads. These heads were fastened on to their legs or feelers and they had to wait for them to wear off. This took time and meanwhile they dragged them around like cannon balls. All doubled up with an acute pain, Miss Black Ant was carried down into the nest and let go. As soon as she had undoubled herself and unstretched her legs she tried to run away, but all the tunnels were guarded by red ants.

Every room was piled with eggs and children—like trunks in a baggage car—which the army had brought in. Two savage red ants ordered Miss Black Ant to sort the eggs and arrange them neatly. They each gave her a nip and told her to step lively or they'd bite her head off. Other black ants were told to wash the children's faces and feed them, or they'd get THEIR heads taken off. So Miss Black Ant went to work sorting eggs in the dark. For a week the red ants continued to bring in more eggs and black children from other nests. Sometimes they brought the old ants and these were set to work taking care of the eggs, feeding the children and washing their faces.

When the eggs hatched Miss Black Ant carried out the shells and left them on the ant hill. Then she ran in again and began to wash the brand new children. She worked all the time and never thought of running away now, and this was exceeding strange and only to be explained by very bald medicine men. She forgot Mr. Grasshopper, she forgot her home, she forgot her name. She went on forgetting while she worked, until she had forgotten everything that happened before the day when she stood on her hind legs and saw the red ants marching up the hill and the very plain female had carried her off with an acute pain.

She could think of nothing but eggs now; she had been hypnotized and nobody knows just what this means. All day long she turned them over and carried them from one place to another. That nest, you



"The ball-bearing jaws dropped the egg shell and the clock-work legs ran her into the tunnel again."





see, was a kind of incubator. She worked in the dark, carrying eggs in her mouth through the long galleries from one room to the next, but she never grew tired at all. She couldn't think of being tired because she could think of nothing but eggs. She worked like a steam shovel, only she made no noise and never got out of order. Her ball-bearing self-oiling jaws opened and seized an egg shell, her body turned on its legs and her legs moved like clock work and ran her out to the dump; the ball-bearing jaws dropped the egg shell and the clockwork legs ran her into the tunnel again.

Red ants were also working on the dump bringing out sand and gravel from the tunnels which were being pushed far down under the hill, but they paid no attention to Miss Black Ant. She had become a slave and would go on carrying eggs and washing children's faces as if she were a machine, and would never get out of order.

One morning in September she was carrying egg-shells from the nest and dropping them on the dump as usual when Mr. Grasshopper came hopping that way.

"Why, Miss Black Ant, what are you doing here?" asked he.

"Don't get in my way," grumbled Miss Black Ant, without looking up to see who it was.

"Why, what's the matter with you, Miss Black Ant?"

"Eggs! Eggs! Eggs!" muttered Miss Black Ant, hurrying out to the dump. "The world is jam chock

full of eggs," and turning like a machine, her legs ran her into the tunnel.

Mr. Grasshopper was so stonished he waited for Miss Black Ant to come out again.

"Where did you leave your cows?" he asked, when Miss Black Ant reappeared, moving rapidly with her mouth full of egg shells.

"He means eggs," mumbled Miss Black Ant to herself. "Don't you see where I leave them?"

"I don't mean eggs at all," shouted Mr. Grasshopper as Miss Black Ant hurried into the tunnel.

Mr. Grasshopper waited again, his behind feet kicking with impatience, but Miss Black Ant did not come back. As he was peering into the tunnel to see what had become of her, a vast red ant snapped her jaws at him and he hopped away in haste.

"Cows! Cows!" repeated Miss Black Ant as she sorted eggs below in the dark and turned them over, touching each one with her feelers to see if it was at the right temperature. "What did he mean by that?" And she continued to think of what Mr. Grasshopper had said, as she toiled day after day in the tunnels and galleries. The time came at last when she was allowed to leave the nest to go on the hunt. Roaming through the woods, wherever she found any particularly nourishing and wholesome food, such as a dead fly, she dragged it back to the ant hill. Now this is what she had done before she had been kidnaped and it had a peculiar effect upon her mind—only to be explained by a per-



fectly bald medicine man—for she came to think less and less about eggs, and more and more about what Mr. Grasshopper had said. She began to remember things—and then, suddenly, she recalled her cows browsing on the maple leaves, as they used to before the very large and very plain female red ant had carried her off with the acute pain.

That instant she started for the maple tree where she had left her cows and she never returned to the red ant hill.

SPOOKY



HE WAS round both ways like a shoe-button and he had no neck. His face; you see, being in the middle of his chest—or was it his back,—of course he had no need of a neck.

Whether he had a head, or not, was a question. His third-or-fourth cousin, the lamented Miss Spider, had always said he was only a head on legs, and she didn't like people with no bodies—there was nothing to them. So she had called him Spooky. Miss Black Ant said that Miss Spider's third-or-fourth cousin was just a body without any head—a body on legs. It was silly enough, she said, not to have a head, but it was worse to have such long legs—it was stravagant.

Head or no head, there was no doubt about his having a face and it always grinned. It grinned if it rained and it grinned if it shined; it grinned when he was fed and it grinned when he was hungry.

"He's just a grin," said Mr. Grasshopper.

"His legs are stravagant," cried Miss Black Ant.

He did have stravagant legs. They were thin as a hair and so long that he had two knees in each leg—at convenient places, so that he could double them up when there wasn't room. When he walked, his knees—there were sixteen of 'em—wobbled so that he couldn't always make his legs go where he wanted them to, so

he would pick up some of the longest and hold them over his head to rest himself.

Spooky lived in the Middle-of-the-Woods where it was damp and grouzly, for he couldn't bear the sunshine. He never spoke to a soul or anything else that he met—he was that shy,—and he was the lonesomest bug in the woods. Yes, Spooky certainly was the lonesomest bug in the woods. He longed to talk to somebody but he hadn't the courage to do it. Whenever he tried, it made his knees wobble, and so he ran away on his stravagant legs and every time he did that he felt more lonesome than ever.

This wasn't Spooky's fault altogether, because they weren't really his legs; they were his late grandfather's and his late grandfather's name was Daddy-long-legs. He inherited them, as the doctors would say, and with his grandfather's legs what could he do but run away. And so Spooky had never spoken to anybody. He would like to have talked to Mr. Grasshopper and Miss Black Ant and to his cousin Miss Spider. More than once he had walked towards them as bold as a sheep, but the moment he looked at them his knees wobbled so that he was obliged to run away as fast as he could.

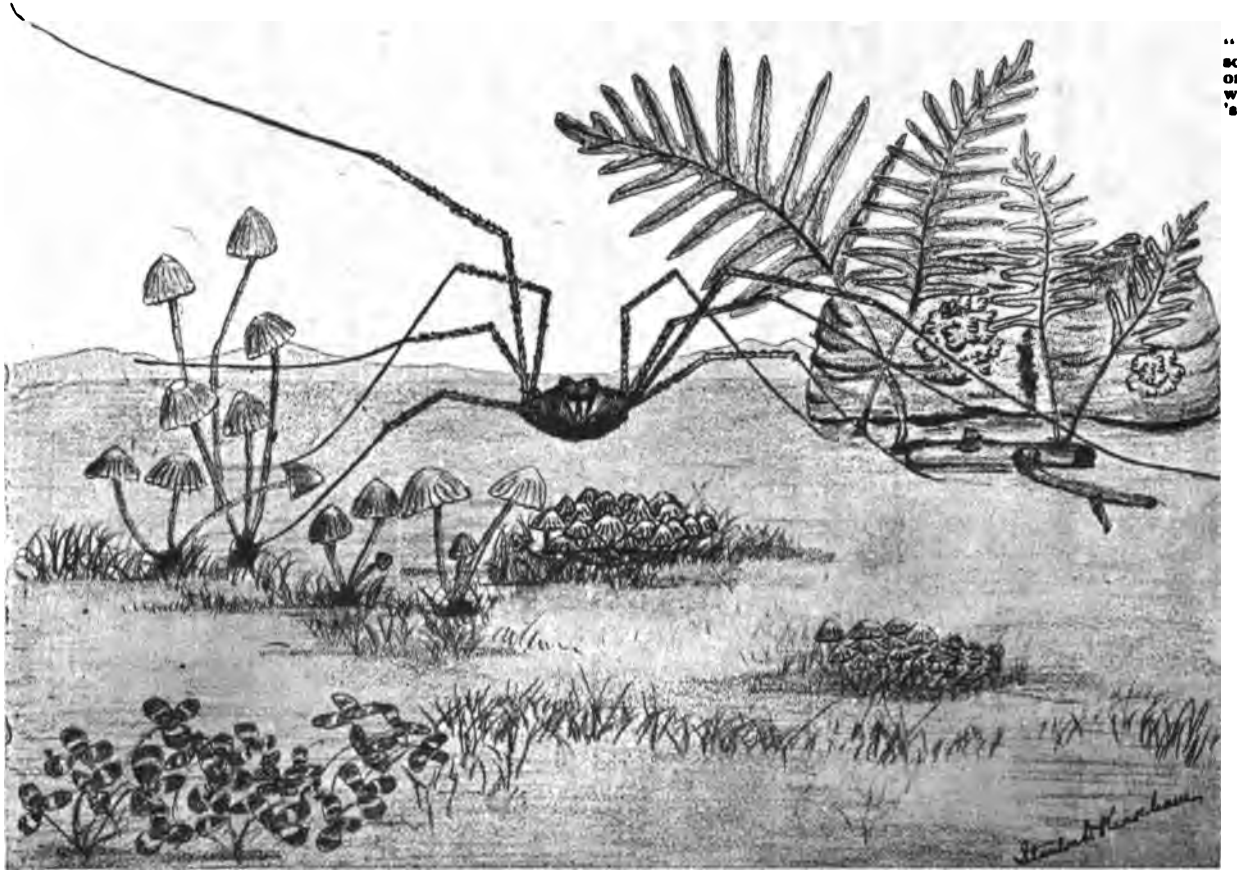
"Gee! it's lonesome!" said Spooky one morning as he wobbled on his stravagant legs. "It's lonesome for little me," and his head—or was it his body—his face, at any rate, went joggling up and down as if it were on springs, while his knees were up in the air above his head, which was the way he always walked

when he felt dismal. But even when he was dismal an dumpish he had to grin, because his face was mad that way and it wouldn't ungrin. You see, that wa his late grandfather's grin, which his late grandfathe had left him with his legs.

So Spooky went grinning on his stravagant legs but he felt very low in his mind and his knees wobbled He was so melancholy that he refused nourishment and that's hijjus melancholy; not a fly nor a bug did he eat, but all day long he wandered in the Middle of-the-Woods.

"I wish something would happen," said he, and he wobbled to the hair-cap mosses where the little blue beetle lives, and stood grinning, but when the little blue beetle looked at him he ran away. Then he tottered to the leathery lichens, the home of the puffy pill bug and grinned at him, but when the puffy pill bug stared at him he made off. And he came at last to the inky mushrooms where lives the tiny fungus fly, grinning as before, but when the tiny fungus fly glared at him with his seven thousand eyes, he rushed away faster than ever. For Spooky's knees they wobbled and Spooky's tongue was tied.

And he never stopped till he came to where the polypod grows on the cold grey rocks. "I wish something would happen," said he again—and something did happen. For there sat four lovely maidens, all perfect-ladies with beautiful thin legs, wobbly knees and no necks. Each wore a grin and all looked pre-



" 'Gee! it's lone-some!' said Spooky one morning as he wobbled on his 'stravagant legs."

cisely alike, so that they could not tell themselves apart. When they saw Spooky the four fell in love with his grin for what one did they all had to do, being precisely alike.

Seeing the lovely maidens, Spooky started to run, but his knees wobbled so that they knocked together over his head and made a queer little noise, and when he heard the noise that his knees made he was paralyzed with fear. And Spooky was in great peril.

The four lovely maidens with the beautiful thin legs looked at him and smirked their sweetest smirk and sighed, but Spooky could hear only the rattle of his knees. Yet they continued to sigh until at last they could contain their feelings no longer.

"Me!" sighed the first maiden.

"Me!" cooed the second.

"Me!" warbled the third.

"Be!" snuffled the fourth, who had a cold and had lost her pocket handkerchief. And the four faces with the four smirks joggled on the beautiful thin legs as if they were on springs.

Then happened a strange thing, there in the Middle-of-the-Woods. Spooky was so terrified that he was desperate: something had to be done, and for the first time in his life his knees stopped wobbling. Bold as a sheep he looked at the first lovely maiden and opened his mouth to speak——but not a sound would come, not even a whisper. He stood on his tip toes; he straightened his knees; he joggled his

head, but not a sound came. Spooky was perfectly-noiseless—he had lost his tongue.

"Me!" sighed the first lovely maiden again.

"Me!" cooed the second.

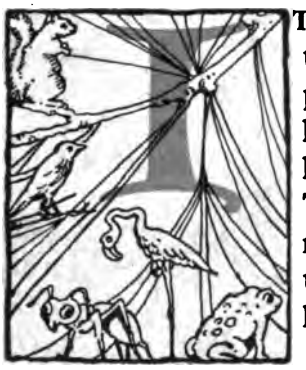
"Me!" warbled the third.

"Be!" snuffed the fourth, with the cold.

Spooky's head sank between his sixteen knees and he lost all hope. Next day he renounced the world and was married to the four lovely maidens with the beautiful thin legs and no necks; for as they were exactly alike he could not tell them apart and so he had to marry them all.

He never found his tongue, but he had no need of it. Nor did he ever feel lonesome again, for the four lovely wives talked all the time, even when they had colds, and would not have heard him if he had said anything.

CHICKAREE



IT IS well to know what isn't so, for then you can read the Sunday papers and understand them. Now here are some facts of unnatural history that may be of use to you. This is the story of a red squirrel named Chickaree and it's just as true as any unnatural history you have ever read.

He was born on the third of April, A.D. 1909, at four A.M. Eastern time, the sun being in the sign of Gemini and the moon in conjunction with Saturn, by reason of which he was destined to think very well of himself and to make a noise in the world.

Chickaree was perfectly DElighted to be born. As soon as he had one eye open he looked around him and said, "Isn't this bully?" When his mother heard this, she was so tickled and pleased she bit a piece off of his left ear as a mark of her affection.

In his infancy Chickaree attended the Common School of the Woods, of which everybody has heard who has studied unnatural history. There he learned how to keep his eyes open and how to find the way to his mouth. When he was three months old he entered the Tree Tops Academy for Young Beasts, where he learned to climb up and down the trunk of a tree, to jump from one branch to another, to open a nut so as to get at the meat, and to strip the scales off of a spruce

cone. He learned also to use his tail as a rudder and to make signs with it; where to look for birds' eggs and which mushrooms are good to eat and which are not. He acquired the use of his nose, his teeth and his tail, and these are the highest branches, taught to advanced classes only.

Before he was born Chickaree learned to swim and that's genius. Geniuses always learn things before they are born—to save time. He knew a ruffed grouse wouldn't hurt him and a horned owl would. He knew about Mr. Skunk's special perfumery and Old Man Porcupine's tail; he learned all this before he was born—but he never learned to hold his tongue, and this is perfectly good unnatural history.

When he was one year old he was sure that he knew all there was to know and a great deal more than anyone else did, so he decided to run away from school and see the world—which was an error.

He had never been away from the home woods, a little patch on the hillside where his Ma and Pa had always lived and he wanted to see what there was in the swamp beyond the pond. He had learned all the broad jumps in the home woods and, having been born when the moon was in conjunction with Saturn and the Sun in the sign of Gemini, he thirsted for adventure.

"You are young, my son, to start out by yourself," said his Pa, "and this is a very wicked world. But you have run away from school and made a good beginning

and I hope you will be able to steal enough to get along. Above all things, be careful not to lose your tail!"

"You are a good boy," said his mother, "and a born thief. Eat plenty of eggs to keep up your strength, and be sure to look out for Miss Weazel. She is small and slim with the head of a serpent and the most evil heart in the woods, and she drinks nothing but blood."

Chickaree promised to be careful of his tail and said he would eat all the eggs he could find to build up his strength. But he said HE wasn't afraid of Miss Weazel and if he ever saw Miss Weazel he'd show her.

So Chickaree ate a robin's egg for breakfast, said goodbye to his Ma and Pa, gave his tail a whisk and set out to see the world. Being such a bright boy for his age he made as much noise as he could, so that everybody in the home woods knew where he was, and from cracks and holes and from under leaves, sharp eyes watched him, but no one made a sound and Chickaree had lots of fun.

"That boy makes more noise than a fool dog," complained Mr. Skunk, who never makes any noise at all.

"He can't help it," said Old Man Porcupine. "He takes after his mother."

Chickaree was satisfied with the noise he made and ran up and down and to and fro, hung by his hind feet and took prodijjus leaps in the air. When he had done this he always sat up with his tail over his head

and made a sound like an alarm clock, which gave him true inward delight.

But Little Bun said, "I wish Miss Weazel would skin that boy," and Miss Crow said, "Amen."

Now Chickaree, being such a bright boy, had a healthy curiosity and wherever he went in the woods he took his healthy curiosity with him and had lots of fun investigating things. Every time he investigated anything new he sat up and went off like an alarm clock and was greatly pleased with himself; but every body said—"Why don't his mother keep him at home?"

He poked his head into every hole and stuck his paw into every crack; ate plenty of eggs as he had promised his Ma and was careful of his tail, as his Pa had told him to be. And his strength being built up by reason of the eggs, he made more noise than ever. Mrs. Yellow Warbler, Mrs. Redeye and Miss Crow were filled with wrath. Their bosoms heaved prodijjus and they agreed that Chickaree was nothing but a fuzzy-tailed rat and they hoped Miss Weazel WOULD skin him. Chickaree had no friends, but he didn't know it, and continued to have lots of fun and to think how bright he was for his age.

And the number of his years being two and having investigated everything in the home woods, Chickaree was no longer happy, saying to himself that he must see Miss Weazel or bust—his very words.

So he inquired of Mr. Gray Squirrel: "Say, Mister,

where does Miss Weazel live?" And Mr. Gray Squirrel said, "You go home to your Ma, Johnnie!"

But Chickaree whisked his tail and skipped through the woods till he came to Old Man Porcupine, and he said to him:

"Say, old Pintail, where can I find Miss Weazel?" But Old Man Porcupine only muttered, "Pooh! pooh! don't bother me!"

Then Chickaree frisked through the woods till he came to Little Bun, and he said: "Say, little rabbit, do you know where Miss Weazel lives?"

"Yes," said Little Bun, "she lives in a stone pile on the hill beyond the swamp and you ought to go and see her. You'll know her by her pleasant smile."

"What color is she?" asked Chickaree.

"She's a beautiful brown," Little Bun replied and slapped his hind foot on the ground—so!

"I ain't afraid of her," said Chickaree and he started for the hill beyond the swamp to look for Miss Weazel, making as much noise as he could.

As there were no eggs, he bit off the cones of the white pine and threw them to the ground. Then he carried them to a stump and gnawed the scales to get the seeds, as he had learned to do in the Tree Tops Academy for Young Beasts. Some, he hid in the roots of a tree. He was DElighted with the swamp. "It's a bully place!" said he, and he took prodijjus leaps in the trees and had heaps of fun frisking about on his way to the hill where Miss Weazel lived. He

saw no one but Miss Crow, who only said "Stop your noise, Bub!" But he failed utterly to comprehend her point of view.

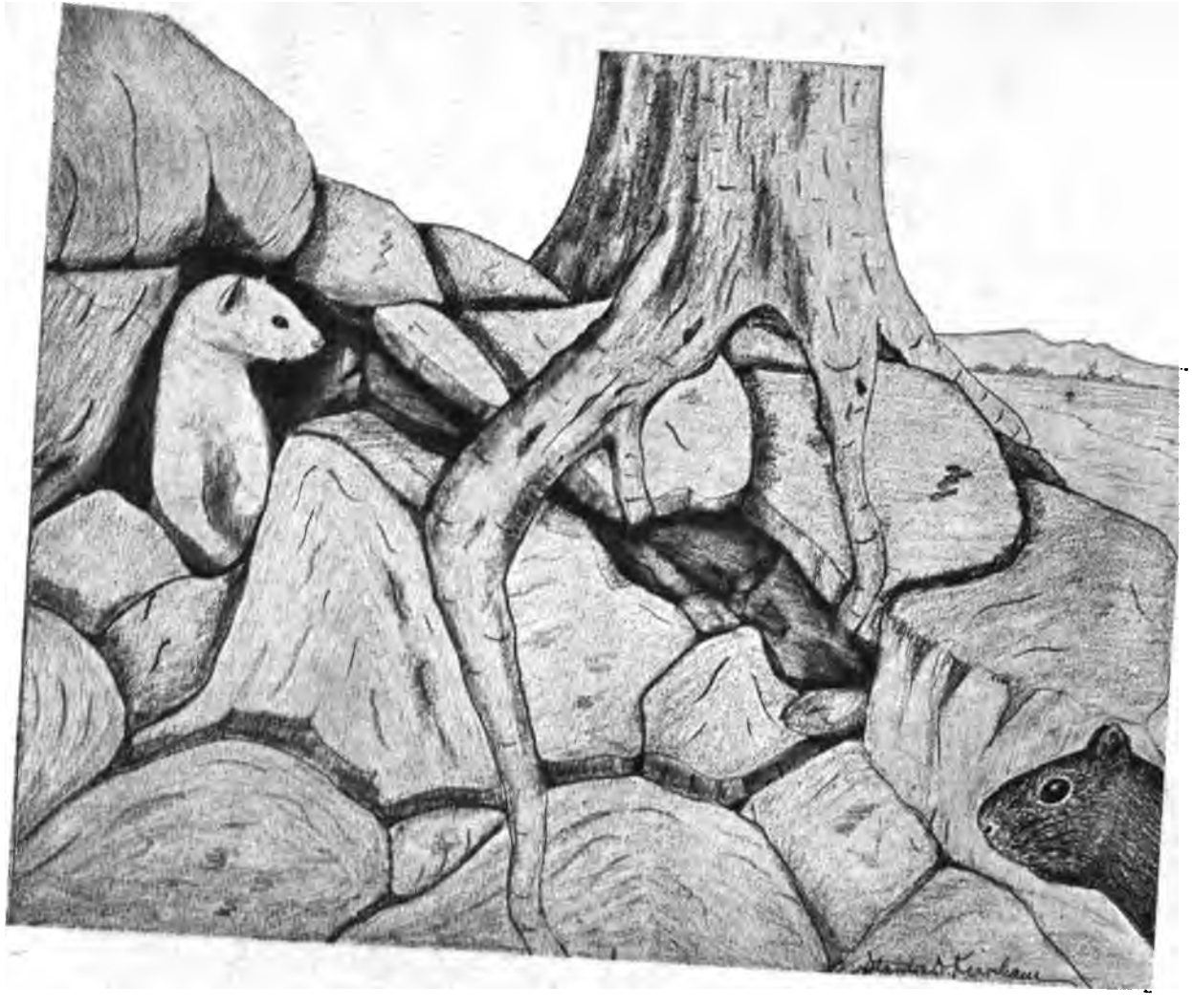
While he wandered in the swamp the wind changed to nor-nor-east and Chickaree warmed his pats in his fur and laughed.

The snow came swizzling over the ground and swirling round the corners, the wind whistled and moaned and everybody else went to bed, but he, being such a bright boy and having such a healthy curiosity, chippered and chuckled and laughed prodijjus and was DElighted with the storm.

But the snow whirled and swirled, till the bayberries were covered and little trees bent to the ground and Chickaree sank out of sight at every jump. When he found he could no longer skip in the snow nor walk, nor even crawl, he was in a rage and used orful language and said all the horrid swear words he had learned at the Tree Tops Academy for Young Beasts.

"Stop it!" he cried to the snow, 'twisting his tail into all kind of shapes in his rage. "Stop it, I tell you!" But the snow kept falling, falling and burying the woods inch by inch and hour after hour. And all the sound it made as the snowflakes drifted through the hemlock needles was a ghostly whisper.

Chickaree fussed and said horrid swear words till his feet were freezing and his tail was stiff with the cold, and then he had to go into the hole in the roots of the tree, where he had hidden the pine cones; but



"The slim head was swaying to and fro on the long thin neck and the burning eyes were fixed on him."

the snow kept falling hour after hour with its ghostly whisper, until every crack and hole was filled and the high blueberry bushes were covered. That night there came a crust over the snow like the crust of a pie.

So Chickaree crouched in a corner and continued to use orful language. It was dark and lonesome and made him fidgety and he drummed with his feet and wished he could get out to go and look for Miss Weazel. He said to himself—"I ain't afraid of her," but he had to make a noise to keep from getting low in his mind.

While he was making all the noise he could, he suddenly smelled an evil odor, such as he had never smelled before, and in that instant he felt someone was watching him. Turning like a flash he saw in the dim light two points of fire which he knew to be eyes and a slim little head with a long thin neck, like the neck of a serpent, and the head and the neck were white as snow. The slim head was swaying slowly to and fro on the long thin neck and the burning eyes were fixed on him.

"Stop staring at me!" screamed Chickaree, who was frightened for the first time in his life, and the head disappeared without a sound. He hated that place now and those eyes, and especially that long neck, and being such a bright boy for his age, he tried to get out, but he couldn't find the hole. The cold was hijjus and he grew low in his mind, for the thought of the little burning eyes and the snaky neck—especially the neck—kept troubling him so that he wriggled and couldn't

sit still. He stood for a long time with his head over his shoulder peering into the darkness to see if there wasn't some one behind him. When he turned around at last, there were the two little fiery eyes again and the slim head.

"If there's anything I can't stand," said the head, with a snarl, swaying to and fro on the long neck, "it's a fussy man."

"W-h-h-h-a-t d'you say?" stammered Chickaree, who had heard very well.

"Or a fool boy," said the head with another snarl.

"I ain't done nothin' to you," cried Chicakree.

"I'd like to skin 'em alive," the head went on, coming nearer and nearer and swaying more rapidly. The lips were drawn back from the teeth and Chickaree felt the little fiery eyes were boring into him. He tried to look away but he couldn't move his eyes and he felt his strength oozing out.

"I ain't done nothin'—" he stammered again, but his tongue stuck to the roof of his mouth.

Nearer and nearer came the swaying head and the burning eyes were paralyzing him. Then the mouth opened with a snarl and the thin white neck shot forward like a flash.

With a scream Chickaree dashed into the air—and heard the jaws snap behind him. He never knew how he got out of that hole. He did not pause until he found himself at the top of a tall tree in the swamp, where he crept in between the roots and sticks of an old hawk's

nest. Somewhere in the rear he felt a sharp pain and tried to whisk his tail, but it wouldn't whisk. Again he tried and turned to see what was the matter—the tail was gone.

"Gee!" cried Chickaree, "I'll catch it now. That must have been Miss Weazel."

Next day he watched for hours before he dared to put out his head. The snow was melting in the sun and he crawled up into the nest and looked about. There was a pain where his tail had been and Chickaree wondered if he really was such a bright boy for his age. It is wonderful what a pain will do for a boy. He tried to make a noise, but he couldn't do it without his tail. This is a very sad story, but it's the best unnatural history. There was nothing left of Chickaree when the tail and the noise were gone, but the gone feeling itself, and he was ashamed to go back to his Ma and Pa.

"Anyhow!" he said to himself, "I stole all the eggs I could," and it made him a little happier to think that he had done something to please his dear Ma.

He felt a good deal the way Mr. Dog did after Mr. Skunk had sprinkled him with his special perfumery. His only wish was that he might not be seen. Finding a hole in the tree, he crept out only now and then to get a nut when he thought no one was looking. But he could not take prodijjus leaps without his tail and was obliged to creep carefully along the branches. It was hard for him to get enough to eat.

"What's become of that fool boy that made such a noise?" asked Mr. Skunk.

"He was looking for Miss Weazel," said Old Man Porcupine. "Perhaps he found her."

One spring day Miss Screech Owl found Chickaree's hole in the tree and decided to make a nest there.

"Some little beast has left his bones here," said she, and cast them out of the hole.

THE SMALLISH THUNDER-DEVIL



THE witch hazel was in bloom, all crinckly and yellow, the hills were blue and the pond was blue. All the little November spiders were flying their first balloons and the smoky air was full of gossamer threads, when Mr. Ruffed Grouse thought of spring—of many springs—and stole away to the drumming place. This drumming place was a punky hemlock log on a hillside, and Mr. Ruffed Grouse stood on the punky hemlock log and drummed—THUMP! —THUMP!—THUMP!——THUMP! THUMP! TH-R-R-R-R-R-R-R-R-R-R-R!!! and the woods echoed with the sound of his drumming.

Little Bun heard it, Mr. Skunk heard it, Old Man Porcupine and the Chickadees and they all said—"Why it sounds like Spring!"

THUMP!—THUMP!—THUMP!——THUMP!!——THUMP!! ——TH-R-R-R-R-R-R-R-R-R!!! drummed Mr. Ruffed Grouse on his log.

"How does he do it?" asked Little Bun.

"He must drum like a woodpecker," answered Mr. Skunk.

"Pooh! Pooh!" muttered Old Man Porcupine. "He puffs himself up like a frog."

"Perhaps," said Little Bun, "he hits a log with his hind foot."

But no one in the woods knew who HE was, and in their hearts they believed the most mysterious sound was made by some smallish Thunder Devil. If it was done by a beast, why had no one ever seen him. Only, Little Bun—being a cocious rabbit's child—was doubtful of Smallish Thunder-Devils.

"I'm going to watch for him," said he to himself one day, wobbling his cocious nose. But he kept his own council and appeared to be thinking of other things, which was perfectly natural. But Chickaree who had been such a bright boy for his age with a very healthy curiosity, could have told him that he had hunted through the woods all of one spring and had never discovered anyone. And Chucky, who had wondered about everything twice, had often heard the strange noise and always said to his very fat Pa—"I wonder what that is," to which his very fat Pa as regularly replied, that it was a good place to wonder.

Sitting in his brush pile next day, Little Bun heard the strange drumming again, afar off in the woods. THUMP! THUMP! THUMP!—THUMP!! THUMP!! TH-R-R-R-R-R-R-R-R-R-R-R-!!! And he set out by devious ways to find it. Be it known once and for all that a cocious rabbit's child never proceeds in a straight line, for he knows very well that the longest way round is the shortest distance between two points.

Little Bun hopped through the woods in the direction of the most-mysterious sound, but the sound kept ahead of him and whenever he arrived at the spot whers

it seemed to be, it was always somewhere else. "That'e curious," said Little Bun, as he wobbled his nose and sniffed the air, and his cocious nose brought him a variety of smells—Mr. Skunk's, Old Man Porcupine's, and the heathen odor of Mr. Blacksnake, which is unlike all others and brings fear to the heart of a rabbit's child. And mixed with these was the smell of Mr. Ruffed Grouse.

Little Bun scratched his ear with his behind foot, pondering bunnywise, and continued in the direction of the most-mysterious sound. He crossed the trail of Mr. Blacksnake, which was like the trail of a garden hose, and the number ten track of Old Man Porcupine; and every now and then he saw the tracks of Mr. Ruffed Grouse, who turns in his toes, but the most mysterious sound was always somewhere else and Little Bun was no wiser.

The crinkly yellow flowers of the witch hazel faded and fell, as crinkly yellow flowers will. Snow covered the ground and Mr. Ruffed Grouse put on his snow shoes and walked over the heads of Chucky and his very fat Pa, as he hunted for partridge-berries, but he drummed no more that year and Little Bun thought of other things.

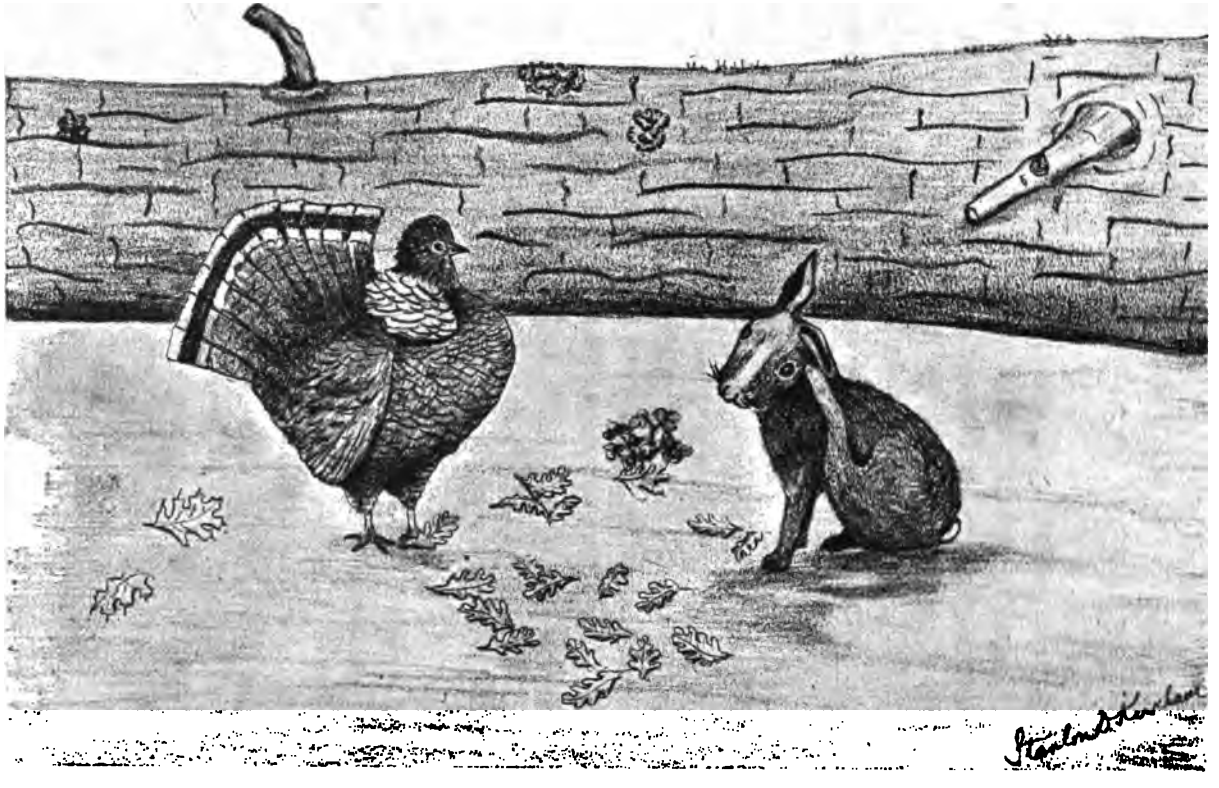
One morning in April when the hylas were singing by the pond and the leopard frogs were snoring, Mr. Ruffed Grouse stole away to his drumming place and stood upon his punky hemlock log and drummed—THUMP! THUMP! THUMP!—THUMP!! THUMP!!—

TH-R-R-R-R-R-R-R-R-R-R-R-!!! Little Bun heard hi and Old Man Porcupine and Mr. Skunk and likewis Mr. Blacksnake, who hears with his tongue, and i their hearts they believed it was some smallish Thun der Devil. Only Little Bun had doubts, saying to him self, "But how does he do it: how does he do it?—an what's a Smallish Thunder-Devil, anyhow?" and h wobbled his cocious nose and set out by devious way to discover if he could, what in the nature of thing such a devil might be like—while in his heart he dis believed.

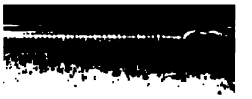
But the most mysterious sound seemed to wande about. When he listened it was silent. Day afte day he scoured the woods and was no wiser—and al most he was persuaded to believe in Smallish Thunder Devils. Yet one thing stuck in the mind of the rabbit' child; whenever he hunted for the most-mysteriou sound his nose brought him the smell of Mr. Ruffe Grouse. "Perhaps," said Little Bun, "he's looking fo it too," and bunnywise he conceived the idea of watch ing Mr. Ruffed Grouse to see what HE was watching— and this was perfectly natural.

Now it was no easy thing to keep an eye on Mr Ruffed Grouse, he being of a nervous temperament and they who run to and fro in the woods hear only th prodijjus whir of his wings—the same being most alarm ing—and see a ball of feathers hurtling through the ai like a bomb.

Little Bun spent much time, yet owing to the ner



" 'I don't mean now,' said Little Bun, putting his behind foot over his ear to see if it rumbled."





vous temperament all he saw was the ball of feathers. One day, however, he came to a log in the woods—a punky hemlock log it was—and the smell of Mr. Ruffed Grouse hung around that place so that Little Bun stopped as if he had been hit.

"So!" said he. "So!" and he scratched his ear with his behind foot and settled himself for a nap. And presently he slept—with one eye open. He slept many hours—one eye being open—for time is nothing to a rabbit, and then appeared Mr. Ruffed Grouse, walking proudly towards the punky hemlock log. With the back of his head he saw Little Bun's cocious nose wobbling and immediately turned and began hunting for patridge berries, as if that was what he had come for and he had expected to find a rabbit there. He was secretly troubled, however, to find anyone at his drumming place—most particularly a boy.

"How you've grown," said he, looking at Little Bun. "Why you're nearly as tall as your father was."

"Do you think so?" said Little Bun, with a foolish grin.

"You're very tall for your age," Mr. Ruffed Grouse went on, glancing nervously around. "Seems like I smell Mr. Fox."

"Huh! Mr. Dog killed Mr. Fox," said Little Bun, wobbling his nose.

"Then it must be Miss Weazel. Yes, surely it's Miss Weazel. I believe she lives in that log."

"I don't smell anything," said Little Bun.

"You must have a cold in your head," said Mr. Ruffed Grouse, looking at him sharply. "Doesn't your throat hurt you?"

"No it don't," replied Little Bun, swallowing to see if it did.

"O, but it must," Mr. Ruffed Grouse insisted. "Your eyes are swollen too, you shouldn't sit in such a damp place."

"'Tis'nt damp, I like it."

"What did you say you were hunting for, boy?"

"Wasn't hunting for anything," said Little Bun. "Least it wasn't anything much."

"Just looking around. See anything?"

"I wonder who makes that noise."

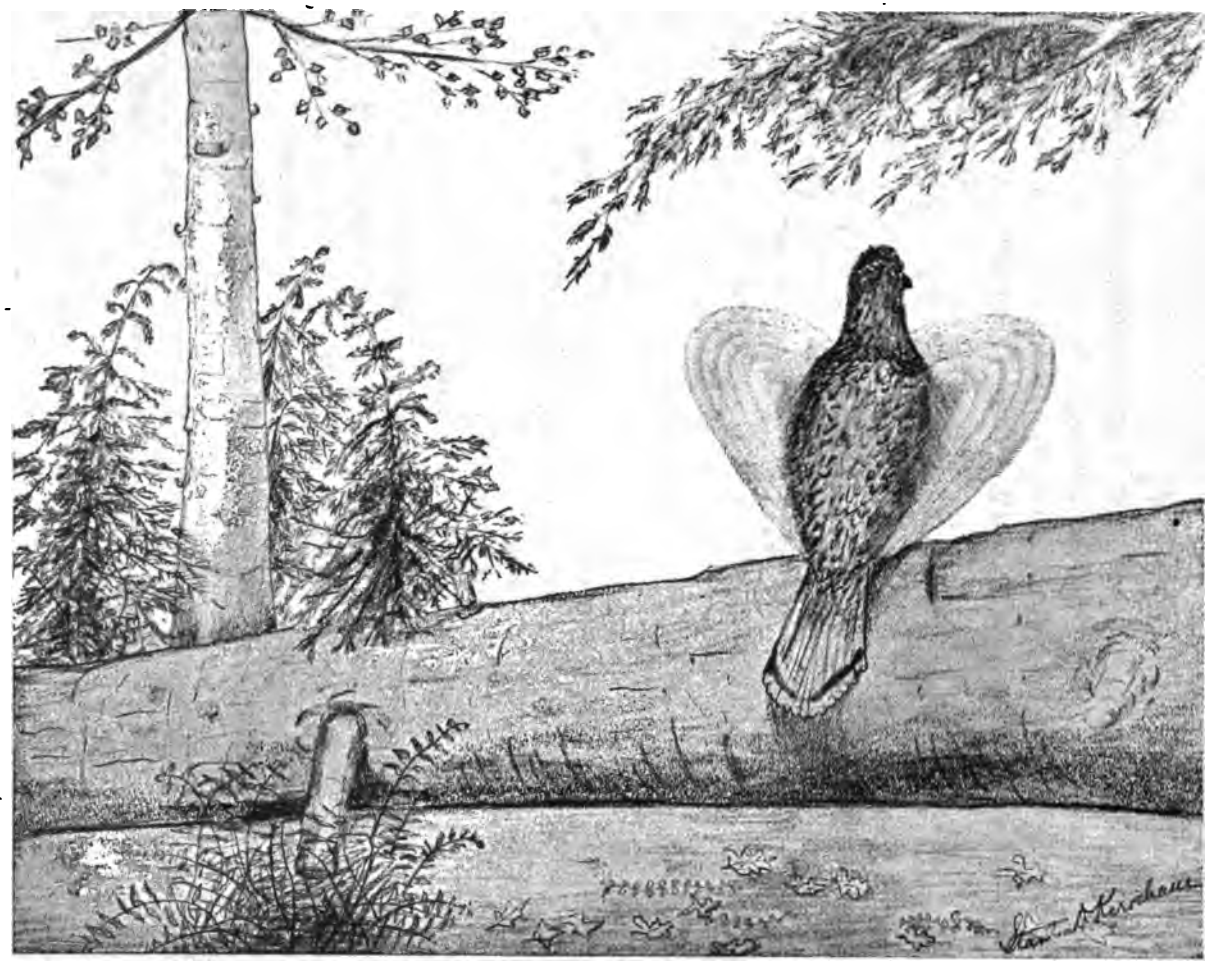
"Noise? I don't hear any. A cold in the head makes the ears rumble."

"I don't mean now," said Little Bun, putting his behind foot over his ear to see if it rumbled.

"There was once a boy—of your size he was, and curious about things that did not concern him. And this boy also went spying about—and came back without his ears. Such is the report. They were large ears like yours."

"But I'd like to see him do it," said Little Bun to himself.

"My advice to you," Mr. Ruffed Grouse went on, puffing out his feathers and shaking his head; "my advice to you is to take care of your ears," and he strutted away and presently was heard the whir of his wings.



"Thereupon Mr. Ruffed Grouse being at peace with himself and knowing no fear, stood upon his punky hemlock log and beat the air with his wings."



"So!" said Little Bun as he went hopping through the woods, his ears flopping, "I wonder what HE'S looking for." And the desire to know Mr. Ruffed Grouse's secret was strong upon him and gave him no rest—which comes of having a cocious nose.

Now the straordinary cociousness of a rabbit's child is not to be described,—it passeth understanding. Little Bun pondered these things bunny-wise and the more he pondered, the more he disbelieved in smallish Thunder-Devils, and was resolved to keep an eye on Mr. Ruffed Grouse—he being of a nervous temperament —and also to take good care of his ears.

Thus it came to pass that Little Bun saw what no one else had seen and it happened in this wise:

The witch hazel was in bloom again, the hills were blue and the pond was blue. All the little November spiders were flying their first balloons and the smoky air was full of gossamer threads, when Mr. Ruffed Grouse thought of spring and stole away to his drumming place. And Mr. Ruffed Grouse saw that he was alone except for the ants who tell no tales. Only he saw with the back of his head a little brownish-greyish stump covered with lichens. The little stump was motionless, as befits a stump covered with lichens, and, owing to the direction of the wind, it had no smell.

Thereupon Mr. Ruffed Grouse being at peace with himself and knowing no fear, stood upon his punky hemlock log and beat the air with his wings—THUMP!! THUMP!! THUMP!!—THUMP!! THUMP!!—TH-R-R-R-R-

R-R-R-R-R-R!!! and the woods echoed with his drumming. Mr. Skunk heard it, and Old Man Porcupine and Mr. Chickadee and they all said, "Why it sounds like spring!" Also Little Bun heard it, but he said nothing.

Mr. Grouse drummed again and again and having relieved his feelings in this manner—he being of a nervous temperament—got down from his log and strutted away.

And thereupon happened a strange thing, for up jumped a small brownish-greyish stump covered with lichens which had been without motion, as befits a stump, and began to wobble what seemed a nose. And having wobbled what seemed a nose, this small stump became possessed of legs—front pats and hind pats—and bunny-wise, began to dance.



THE END OF THE WORLD



EARLY in the morning of the first Tuesday after the second Friday in April, Queen Bumblebee awoke and rubbed her eyes, which took an hour and a quarter—her eyes being too-numerous-to-mention.

"It feels like Tuesday," said the Queen drowsily, when she had gotten some of them open. "I must have been asleep."

"What does this mean!" she cried excitedly a moment later, rubbing away and buzzing to call some one. "Where's that bumble-puppy the King? Where are all my people?"

The truth of the matter is that in the previous November her Majesty, and all of her subjects, had fallen asleep under the leaves where they had crept to try and keep warm, and she was the only one to awaken on this first Tuesday morning after the second Friday in April. The others had frozen to death, this being an established custom among the Bumblebee people.

The Queen buzzed and buzzed, but there being no one else alive of course no one came.

"Here it is Tuesday and nothing done," cried she. "I shall have to see to this at once." Having rubbed all of her eyes she was wide awake now and trembling with excitement. "There's no time to lose," she cried as she scurried about looking for her people, "not a minute, not a second!"

No Bumblebees were to be seen, however, and the Queen was in a frenzy. "It's shameful!" she shrieked. "I must find another house before night and I hate house hunting," and buzz she went, after the manner of royal personages among Bumblebee people, into every crack, bumping her head and stirring up the dust and bits of dry leaves like a small cyclone. "It's getting late," she screamed and just then she buzzed into a hole under a log and suffered a head-on-collision with a small toad who was sitting in his doorway.

"I'm not at home," said the small toad, rubbing his nose with a clammy hand.

"Stupid!" cried Her-Majesty-the-Queen, picking herself up.

"The lady of the house is not at home, either," said the small toad, staring at her till his eyes stuck out of his head.

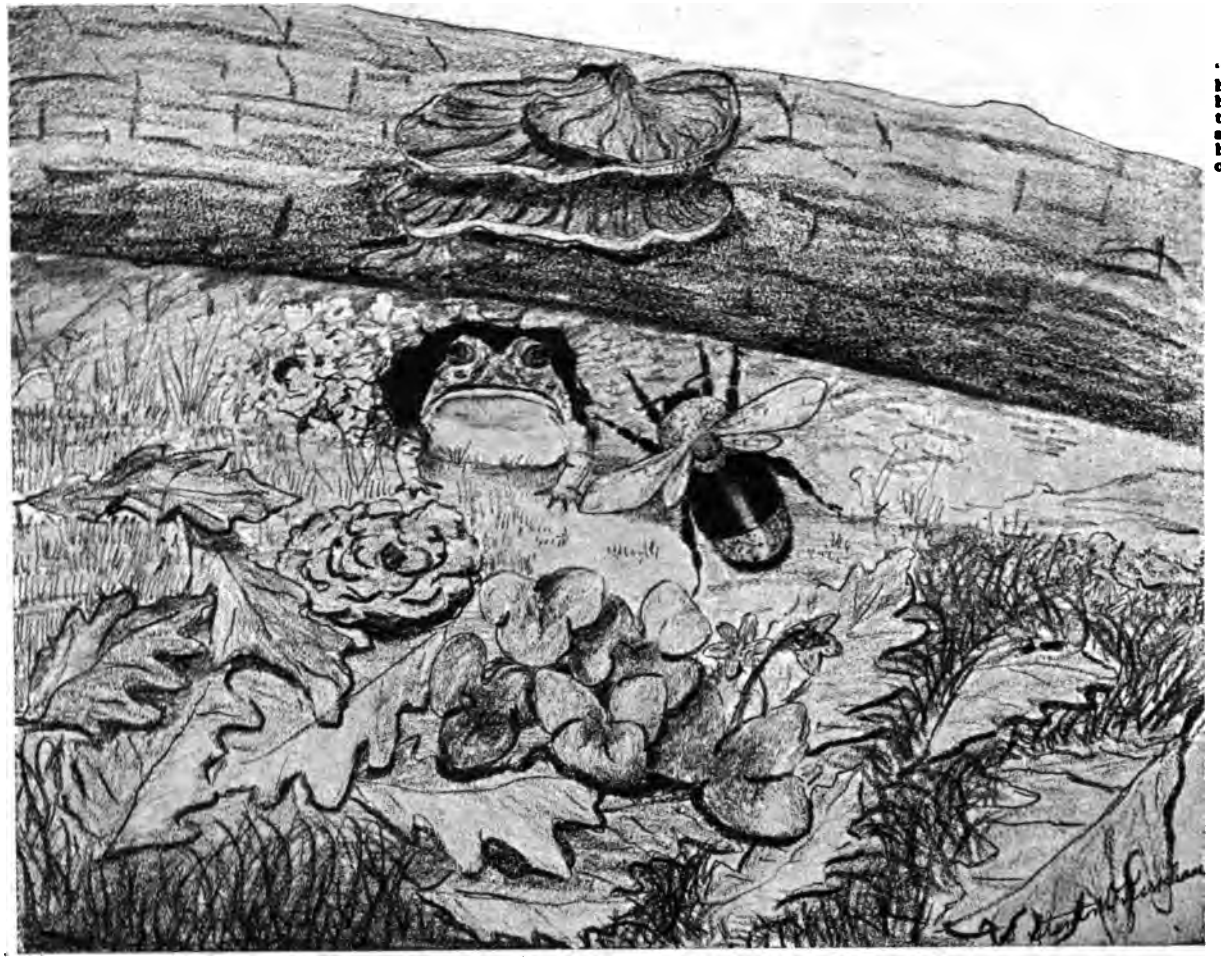
"Stupid!" cried the Queen again. "Don't you know a queen when you see her?—and I've lost my family—and here it is Tuesday—and something must be done—there's no time to lose—and—!!"

"But," began the small toad, mildly.

"No one to be found," shrieked the Queen, frantically. "If you had any sense—you'd see—a lone woman—such impudence, and it's getting late—late—late—!!!"

"If—" began the small toad again.

"O, don't talk to me—the idea!—anybody with any sense—!" But at this moment the small toad shut his eyes and shuffled out of his hole, hopping off



" 'The lady of the house is not at home, either,' said the small toad, staring at her till his eyes stuck out of his head."

as fast as he could, and the Queen was left alone. "Did you ever see such a stupid creature!" she exclaimed. "I merely asked him a civil question."

The toad having disappeared, Her Majesty buzzed into the hole.

"Why this is just the place!" cried she, rubbing the dust from an eye and looking around. "I must get settled."

So she tore through the woods, slam-banging into the flowers one after another, collecting bread—bee bread, you know,—with some honey to eat with it, which she brought back in little baskets on her legs. As soon as she had enough, she laid an honorable egg in this bread and honey and rushed out for another supply.

Now there were those who watched her as she came and went intent upon her affairs; a sharp-eyed little bee - too lazy to build a house of her own, a long-nosed beetle and a brown moth, all lazy good-for-nothing critters. When the Queen was away filling her baskets, one by one they stole into the house, where the impudent things actually laid eggs in the pile of bread and honey. Then they laughed in their sleeves at the low down joke they had played on royalty and stole away--one by one.

Having laid honorable eggs, her Majesty went on a journey across the pasture and into the woods on the other side of the hill, where she was caught in a butterfly net by the Terrible Boy, who put her in a bottle and carried her off. And she abode in that bottle some

days in a state of mind, till the Terrible Boy being moved to examine his capture, dropped the cover and the Queen escaped.

Circling in the air, she turned and flew straight over the hill and through the woods to the hole under the log, buzzed in at the door—and stopped, as a long-nosed beetle poked out his beetle black head and looked at her inquiringly.

As she stood looking at the childish face of the beetle something began to come out of a cocoon, a brown moth if you please. Then two black heads appeared and out stepped two little bees, but they weren't bumblebees at all.

"Why, you are not my children!" cried the Queen, in a rage. "Where on earth did you come from?"

But the long-nosed beetle, the brown moth and the two little bees didn't know. They just found themselves there, and the Queen was so big and hummed in such a ferociable manner that they were frightened to death.

"Where did YOU come from?" she demanded again, and she looked as big as a mouse there in the doorway.

"Please ma'am, we don't know," said one little bee.

"Don't know! then get out of here—all of you!"

"Please ma'am, we can't get out," said the other little bee.

"Can't get out! Why can't you?"

"Please ma'am, cause you're so big," said both little bees together.



It was true. Her Majesty completely filled the doorway.

With a great deal of buzzing she backed out and the long-nosed beetle, the brown moth and the two little bees followed timidly. As soon as they were outside all four flew away.

The Queen buzzed into the hole again and behold —four heads poking out of four holes in the bread and honey. Rushing up to them she looked at each one. Surely these were her children, her own children. She hummed with pleasure as the little worms wriggled about—young bees are always worms, you know; it's an established custom—and began spinning cocoons around themselves. When they had spun themselves out of sight she went to work covering the little cocoons with wax. And thenceforth Her Majesty laid honorable eggs daily.

At this time there was much activity in that region among the various Bee people and their cousins, the Wasps. Building was going on on every hand. Upholsterer Bees were excavating in the black cap raspberry stems and making cells of silk within. In the stems of sumacs Leaf-cutter Bees were building rooms of wild rose leaves. Mason Bees were at work underground, while from a rotten stump nearby, Hornets brought material for a palatial rain-proof hotel, and the rooms were being taken as fast as they were finished. Wood Wasps and Mud Wasps were preserving spiders for infant food and stocking their houses. Gallflies

were puncturing leaves and laying eggs in them. Hunting Spiders ran here and there in the grass looking for game. It was a year of bumper crops. There was a boom in the building trade and all the world was at work moving the crops or building houses and storerooms; and part of the world was overeating.

In this hour of prosperity, when the world waxed fat and the hum of industry filled the air, the Terrible Boy arose and girded up his loins and said unto himself, "I will play Indian, that will I, and will have a camp fire in the woods and will make war whoops to beat the band."

Thus said the Terrible Boy in the pride of youth and having taken, most surreptitious, a box of Surpassing Safety Matches (none genuine without the label) he strode into the woods, munching as he strode an apple of an incomparable greenness. And by his side stalked Destiny.

"Here," quoth he, standing with godlike unconcern over the very home of Queen Bumblebee, and just under the palatial rainproof hotel of the Hornets, every room of which was now taken,—"is a bully place."

"A bully place!" echoed Destiny by his side.

Thereupon the Terrible Boy took from his bulging pockets another apple and straightway began piling sticks over the happy home of Queen Bumblebee. This done he surveyed his work with godlike glance as he consumed the core, and drawing from his pocket the box of Surpassing Safety Matches (none genuine



without the label) he struck them one by one and two by two, holding them to the brush pile, till a thin blue curl of smoke ascended to the heavens.

"Well done!" quoth Destiny, stalking at his side.

When the Terrible Boy saw the smoke, he was filled with savage joy, and taking yet another apple, greener than the last, he capered about the fire in the pride of youth, whooping like mad. Said he, "I'm a Comanche Chief and my name is Yellow Jacket."

"'Tis well!" quoth Destiny, capering at his side.

As the smoke rose and the flames crackled it became most atrocious hot in the palatial rain-proof hotel of the Hornets, and presently they who had rooms on the first floor issued thence in ruffled mood complaining of the weather, and two of them—lady hornets, they were—alighted on the freckled nose of Yellow Jacket the Comanche Chief, still capering and whooping between bites. And as they sat upon his nose their tails were hot—O hijjus hot—, so that he abandoned his care-free godlike mien and, letting fall the apple, clapped his hand upon his freckled nose and made war whoops anew; and these whoopings came from the very depths of his savage soul and smote upon the air. And Yellow Jacket returned forthwith to the home of his fathers.

With a rumbling and a crackling and a hissing and a sputtering which brought terror to all the world, the flames leapt to the heavens. A sizzle and a flash, like the sputter of a Surpassing Safety Match (none genuine

without the label) and the palatial rain-proof hotel was burned to a crisp.

The world was on fire, the ground cracked and opened, a pall of black smoke obscured the sun and out of the lurid sky fell a rain of ashes.

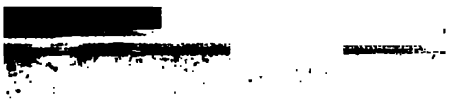
Terror spread among the Bee peoples as the roar and crackle of the flames increased and leaves and grass shrivelled and were consumed. Masons, carpenters and upholsterers left their work and rushed frantically about, calling to each other that the world was coming to an end. Many took to their wings only to be suffocated in the smoke and to fall back into the flames, their wings destroyed. Not one escaped. From beneath a stone a stream of meadow-ants issued rapidly, heroically carrying eggs and young children in their mouths, but were overcome by the fiery heat in tens and thousands.

The last to leave her post, Queen Bumblebee appeared at the entrance to her home, unable to endure any longer the scorching heat below. At the door lay the seared and blackened body of the little toad. "The world is coming to an end!" cried she, "O my poor children!" and these were the last words she spoke.

Presently the smoke cleared away and the fire burned low. The roar and crackle ceased and all was still. Only a few glowing embers in a mound of ashes were left to tell where the world had been.

Alone in the silence, Destiny stood and gazed upon the ruin. " 'Tis done!" quoth he.





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